

# Women and Military Service

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*A History, Analysis, and Overview  
of Key Issues*

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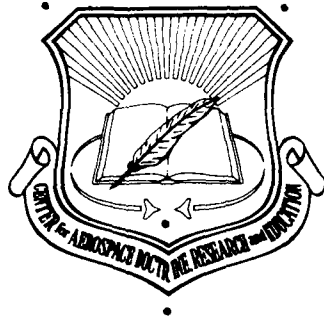
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# Women and Military Service

*A History, Analysis, and Overview  
of Key Issues*

by

**M. C. DEVILBISS, PhD**  
*Senior Research Fellow*



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*To my mother,  
Delores Sittig Devilbiss  
and  
To the memory of my father,  
John Austin Devilbiss*

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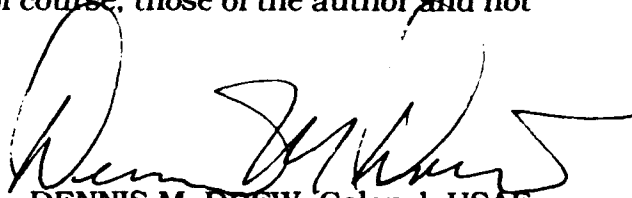
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## **Foreword**

Today's Air Force depends in large part on women to meet its mission requirements. Tomorrow's Air Force may depend on women even more. It behooves us, then, to examine those issues that are of concern to women in the military.

AUCADRE is pleased to provide a forum for this discussion of those issues. The opinions expressed are, of course, those of the author and not of AUCADRE.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dennis M. Drew', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

DENNIS M. DREW, Colonel, USAF  
Director  
Airpower Research Institute



## **About the Author**



**M. C. Devilbiss**

M. C. Devilbiss received a PhD in sociology from Purdue University and was a postdoctoral research fellow at Yale University. She has taught sociology, psychology, and organizational behavior courses, both at the graduate and undergraduate levels at various colleges and universities throughout the United States, including Norwich University in Northfield, Vermont (one of the nation's four private military colleges). From 1984-86, she was a senior research fellow at Air University Center for Aerospace Doctrine, Research, and Education (AUCADRE) at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama; and from 1986-88 she was a research sociologist for the US Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences in Alexandria, Virginia. Her military experience includes two years of active duty as a US Army officer and eight years as an enlisted woman in the Air National Guard. Her various military duties have included assignments as basic training instructor, supply officer, electrical specialist, and aircraft armament systems specialist (bomb and missile loader) on the F-4 aircraft. Since 1975, she has been writing and publishing on women's issues in the armed forces. Dr Devilbiss currently resides in Frederick, Maryland.

## ***Preface***

Today, the armed forces of virtually all nations have women in them. In the United States, women represent about 10 percent of the active duty military population. Thus the topic of women and military service is an important and timely one.

Women have served in and with the United States armed forces since the founding of our nation; yet it has only been since the 1970s that issues concerning women in the military have been seriously and systematically pursued by both scholars and military planners. This volume is an effort to identify and examine key events, questions, and policies pertaining to women in the United States armed forces. To do this, a multidisciplinary analytical strategy that incorporates the methodology and conceptual tools of history, social science, organizational theory, policy analysis, and *future studies* was adopted.

Chapter 1 presents a history of women in the US armed forces. To understand the contemporary situation of women in the military, it is necessary to understand the historical roots of the issues. Many of the questions being raised about women in the military today have also been issues of concern in the past; thus these questions have a "military" history. In fact, there have been several recurring questions about the utilization of women in the military. These issues have relevance today just as they had in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but the ways in which we address and answer these concerns may be different now because of (1) changing patterns of societal expectations, and (2) changes in the military organization itself.

It is these issues that form the basis for chapter 2, which uses social science concepts and analytical methods to examine major instruments and patterns of change regarding women in the armed forces. Both internal military factors and factors external to the military organization are examined for their effects on the military roles of women. "What forces seem to determine the extent and the scope of the utilization of women in the military?" is the question explored.

Chapter 3 identifies and analyzes 10 contemporary "key issue areas" pertaining to women in the military. It examines not only the visible symptoms of current problems but also the underlying causes that contribute to them. Utilizing an "organizational culture" approach, chapter 3 examines the organizational values and assumptions upon which military policy is built and looks at the future of women in the US armed forces. Finally, it examines some potentially useful techniques that could be employed in future policy planning.

## ***Acknowledgments***

A book is seldom the product of just one writer; the combination of many people's efforts help to bring it successfully to completion. I would like to recognize those people who assisted in the production of this book and to thank them for their many hours of dedicated effort.

The initial draft of this manuscript was written while I was assigned as a senior research fellow at the Air University Center for Aerospace Doctrine, Research, and Education (AUCADRE) at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, during 1984-86. Since that time, many events and new policies have affected the situation of women in the armed forces. Accordingly, this text has been revised and updated to include a consideration of these materials. I would especially like to thank Col Dennis M. Drew, director of the Airpower Research Institute, for his assistance. Special thanks also go to my editor, Preston Bryant; the Production Division; and Dr Elizabeth Bradley, all at the Air University Press. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the support of my sister Bonnie Devilbiss Boger, who heard all about this manuscript throughout its various stages of completion, and also my mother Delores Sittig Devilbiss, who not only heard all about the book but actually funded a "summer sabbatical" for me so that I could finish writing it. It is in appreciation of these efforts that I dedicate this book.

## ***Introduction***

This book explores three major questions concerning the roles of women in the military. They are:

- What has been the history of policy development on this issue?
- Why and how have policy changes occurred?
- What concerns and issues remain on the policy agenda?

A critical analysis of these questions yielded a set of working hypotheses that helped to explain the history and evolution of policy in this arena. In brief, these hypotheses are:

- The incorporation of women into the US armed forces has been an evolutionary process.
- Factors that have been instrumental in effecting change for women in the military have been both external (change has come through forces outside the military) and internal (change has been a product of intraorganizational forces). For example, the roles of women in the US armed forces have reflected to a great extent the roles of women in the society at large (an external factor), but these have also reflected the changing structure of the military organization itself (an internal consideration). One particularly influential internal factor stands out, however: The perception of "military need" (variously defined in differing circumstances) has been the primary driver in the utilization of women in the US armed forces.
- Major current policy issues concerning women in the military are pragmatic, visible illustrations of unresolved underlying issues. For a more complete understanding of these concerns, it is necessary to bring not only these visible problems but also their underlying issues and their institutional supports under close examination and analysis. It is only through such a process that constructive suggestions for change can realistically be made.

The discussion that follows examines these hypotheses as each question—history, instruments and patterns of policy change, and issues remaining—is explored in turn.

## Chapter 1

# Historical Patterns and Recent Policy Shifts

The incorporation of women into the US armed forces has been an evolutionary process.

Women have served in and with the armed forces of the United States since the very beginning of its history as a nation. But although it is known that "during the 18th and 19th centuries, women were routinely present with the armies in battle,"<sup>1</sup> it is very difficult to document the exact nature and scope of their participation due to the loss and selective preservation of many of these early records. However, two American historians have studied the military activities of women during the revolutionary war and have identified several roles in which women were involved.

Linda K. Kerber cites women's utilization in that war as, among other things, espionage agents, cooks, laundresses, military nurses, and matron and boardinghouse landladies. (The eighteenth-century boardinghouse served the double purpose of caring for both the sick and the traveler and can be thought of as an early version of the military hospital.)<sup>2</sup> Linda Grant DePauw identifies three major categories of military participation for women during the American Revolution: "First, those . . . referred to as 'women of the army', or 'army women'; second, those enlisted as regular troops fighting in uniform side by side with male Continentals; and third, women serving as irregular fighters affiliated with local militia companies." Far from being "camp followers" or "battlefield domestics," DePauw says, the "women of the army" were a distinct branch of the Continental Army that performed duties with artillery units on the battlefield and served as medics both in the field and in military hospitals. The second category of women, perhaps a few hundred according to DePauw, "served in combat with the Continental Army (as) regularly enlisted soldiers." Some served disguised as males (wore male clothing and enlisted under male names) while others who fought as regular soldiers made no effort to conceal their sex; they fought in combat and drew pay, rations, and pensions under their own names. Finally, local militia units (as opposed to regular garrison troops) were often composed partly or entirely of women and were employed as local defense forces. Further, DePauw notes that women also served on warships during this period.<sup>3</sup>

It is important to observe here that women served *with*, not *in*, the armed forces during this time. That is, even though they may have been paid (or

not paid) for the duties they performed, they did not hold military rank and were thus *attached to*, not a *part of*, the armed forces.

Women continued to perform various roles within the military organizations of the nineteenth century. Conflicts during this time included the War of 1812, the Civil War (1861–65), and the Spanish-American War (1898). This century was also the period of expansion of the American frontier. There is evidence that women were employed by the military as scouts and that some were also attached to frontier outposts at this time.<sup>4</sup>

During the Civil War, women acted as saboteurs, couriers, and spies;<sup>5</sup> they also performed what would be termed *combat support* and *combat service support* functions today: cooking, laundering, supplying ammunition on the battlefield, and performing camp maintenance.<sup>6</sup> In addition—once again—women disguised as men served in the army and fought in combat.

Judging from its subsequent impact, however, the single most influential contribution made by women during this time was in the field of health care.<sup>7</sup> As was the case during the American Revolution, “death due to disease (in the Civil War) continued to account for a far greater proportion of mortality in the war than death due to wounds and injury; thus the care of the sick and injured (was) a riskier military occupation than that of soldier.”<sup>8</sup> Trained medical personnel were in great demand but short supply. The efforts of Clara Barton and the Sanitary Commission (composed largely of women and established by the Union army under pressure from the Women’s Central Association of Relief) helped to enforce standards of sanitation and thus dramatically reduced the number of deaths due to disease.<sup>9</sup> These women “also obtained permission to convert transport ships into the first primitive hospital ships to care for the wounded.”<sup>10</sup> In addition, some 6,000 female nurses were recruited and trained to serve with the Union army, primarily through the efforts of Dorothea Dix, appointed superintendent of women nurses by the US secretary of war.<sup>11</sup> A significant event in US women’s military history occurred during the Civil War: Dr Mary Walker, a combat surgeon and the first woman doctor in the US Army, was awarded the Medal of Honor by Congress. Walker has been the only woman thus far in US history ever to receive this award.<sup>12</sup>

But, however grateful the armed forces were for the women’s wartime contributions (particularly those of the nurses), they did not yet perceive of women as either integral to or a continuing part of the military organization. Thus “when the war ended in 1865, the Army reverted to the practice of using enlisted men for patient care in its hospitals, and the female nurses went home.”<sup>13</sup>

During the Spanish-American War, women nurses were given an opportunity to serve because they possessed a skill that the military needed and the services could not recruit nearly enough male medical corpsmen to deal with an epidemic of typhoid fever among US troops. To address this need, Congress authorized the military to appoint women as nurses—but as civilian workers rather than as uniformed members of the military. Be-

tween 1898 and 1901, approximately 1,500 women served as nurses under contract to the Army and Navy in the United States, overseas (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Japan, China, the Philippines), and aboard the hospital ship *USS Relief*.<sup>14</sup> The contributions and quality of service of the contract nurses during this period convinced the surgeon general of the Army to request that the legislation necessary to give the nurses quasi-military status be drawn up.

Congress established the Army Nurse Corps in 1901 and the Navy Nurse Corps in 1908. The status of these corps relative to their respective military organizations was an ambiguous one, perhaps best described as a military "auxiliary": nurses "had no military rank, equal pay, or other benefits (of) military service such as retirement or veterans benefits."<sup>15</sup> Yet the importance of the establishment of a *permanent* nurse corps of women within the armed forces is clear—the skills and contributions of trained nurses were being recognized as an essential and ongoing part of military organizations. The importance of the nurse corps' *auxiliary organizational status* was that although their role was seen as permanent and ongoing, women—even those with skills vital to a military organization—were still considered to be *outside* the "real" military structure.

With this nebulous foot in the military door, the precise status of women in military organizations was an issue that would continue to present itself. Scarcely had the twentieth century begun when, after much internal debate, the United States again found itself engaged in mobilization for military operations—this time on a global scale. Not surprisingly, both the Army and the Navy faced increasing personnel shortages in certain critical skill areas. A number of these shortages existed in those jobs classified as "combat support" occupations. The question was, could these needs be alleviated by placing skilled *women* into these heretofore considered *male* military jobs? The answer seemed to be an elusive one, subject as it was to legal constraints and interpretations of the times. Faced with this context and with similar manpower shortages for their respective services, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker and Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels both concluded that skilled women must be utilized but came to exactly opposite conclusions as to their organizational statuses. For example, the Navy faced a desperate shortage of clerks (yeomen). Capt Joy Bright Hancock, USN, later assistant chief of staff of Naval Personnel for Women, described Secretary Daniels's retelling of his solution to this problem:

"Is there any law that says a yeoman must be a man?" I (Daniels) asked my legal advisors. The answer was that there was not, but that only men had heretofore been enlisted. The law did not contain the restrictive word "male."

"Then enroll women in the Naval Reserve as yeomen," I said, "and we will have the best clerical assistance the country can provide." Tremendous gasps were heard, but this was an order, and it was carried out.<sup>16</sup>

Thus women were enrolled into the Naval Coastal Defense Reserve in 1917, given uniforms and enlisted rank in the ratings of yeomen (F), radio

electricians, and "such other ratings as the Commandants considered essential to the District organization." Some of the additional duties at which the yeomen (F) were employed included those of draftsmen, fingerprint experts, translators, camouflage designers, and recruiters.<sup>17</sup> They served in the United States as well as overseas, some seeing "duty with hospital units in France and with intelligence units in Puerto Rico."<sup>18</sup>

Soon after women were enrolled in the Navy, Maj Gen George Barnett, commandant of the Marine Corps,

wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Navy requesting authority "to enroll women in the Marine Corps Reserve for clerical duty at Headquarters Marine Corps and at other Marine Corps offices in the United States where their services might be utilized to replace men who may be qualified for active field service."<sup>19</sup>

Secretary Daniels sent back his approval on 8 August 1918.

Ultimately, about 12,500 yeomen women and 305 women Marines served in the Navy and Marine Corps in World War I. There is also evidence that women were enlisted into the Coast Guard at this time to perform needed clerical duties. Thus the yeomen and Marine reserves of World War I were the first American women "to be accorded full military rank and status." Such a designation meant that they received the same pay as enlisted men of corresponding rank (but women were permitted to advance only up to the rank of sergeant), wore uniforms and rank insignia, took an oath of office, were subject to military discipline, had a service obligation (four years), and, as veterans, were "afforded the full benefits legislated into law, the same as their male counterparts."<sup>20</sup>

Things were very different, however, with regard to the incorporation of women from the Army side. Secretary of War Baker was particularly opposed to any notion of military status for women and, unlike Secretary of the Navy Daniels, chose to utilize women (other than those in the nurse corps) in a strictly civilian capacity. Thus, those women who worked for the Army in jobs often similar to those performed by the yeomen (F) and Marine reservists (F) continued to hold a civilian rather than a military status, despite several requests for their militarization from Army commanders and heads of agencies in the field. Mattie E. Treadwell recounts that requests for the skills and services of American women in a military status came from several areas. Requests came from:

- Gen John J. Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Forces, for bilingual (French and English) telephone operators for the Signal Corps;
- the Quartermaster General for a proposed "Women's Auxiliary Quartermaster Corps" tasked with support duties for supply and procurement;
- the chief of Engineers;
- the Operations Branch of the General Staff;
- and the chief of Ordnance for women in clerical, stenographic, and other needed skill areas in which men, because of combat requirements, could not be obtained.



These entreaties did not receive favorable consideration at the War Department level, however. In fact, "legislation to enlist 'effective and able-bodied women' had . . . [even] been introduced in Congress in December of 1917, but had been returned to the House Military Affairs Committee by the Secretary of War with an expression of his disapproval."<sup>21</sup>

General Pershing did get women telephone operators—civilian contract workers, some of whom wore uniforms but none of whom had military status. But Gen James G. Harbord, commander of the Services of Supply in Europe, who had requested 5,000 skilled military women be sent to perform clerical duties with the Quartermaster Corps, received 5,000 limited-duty, unskilled Army enlisted men instead. Ultimately, some women did perform duties in the Quartermaster Corps both stateside and overseas; but they did so as civilian contract employees, not as military personnel.<sup>22</sup>

During this time, of course, there were also women in the Army and Navy Nurse Corps, albeit still with their quasi-military status. What seemed to matter to the military as the United States entered World War I in April 1917, was not the nurses' *status* but their *presence* in the organization. As mobilization began, the Army's active duty nurse corps stood at 403; it would grow to a peak strength of 21,480, serving at 198 stations in the United States and overseas in France, Belgium, England, Italy, Siberia, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Philippine Islands. During World War I, "Army nurses were assigned to casualty clearing stations and surgical teams in field hospitals as well as to mobile, evacuation, base, camp, and convalescent hospitals. They also served on hospital trains and transport ships, . . . in busy cantonment and general hospitals, at ports of embarkation, and at other military outposts." The Navy Nurse Corps, smaller (less than 1,500 members) but no less devoted to duty, also established a reputation for courage and sacrifice during this difficult time.<sup>23</sup>

All women in the US armed forces, except the nurses, were transferred to inactive duty and then discharged at the end of World War I. The nurse role was seen as a continuing one even in peacetime, but the quasi-military status of the nurses continued to be a source of debate. In the case of the Army, both "the War Department and the Surgeon General's office fought against granting women (commissioned) rank, contending that it would be improper to give women rank that might give them hierarchical superiority to male officers . . . [also] many objections were posed based on the assumption that military rank should be reserved for those engaged in combat." The other side argued that female nurses needed commissioned rank so as to increase efficiency in working relationships. In 1920 a compromise was effected: nurses would receive "relative rank," which entitled them to a similar nomenclature and insignia relative to male officers in the grades of second lieutenant through major, and "authority in and about military hospitals next after (male) officers of the Medical Department." "Relative rank" meant a separate and unequal status. Women

lacked the authority and privileges—and the comparable pay—of male commissioned officers.<sup>24</sup>

For the next two decades, no women except nurses were in the military. In fact, the Naval Reserve Act of 1916, which had authorized the Navy to enlist "citizens"—the loophole that had enabled enrollment of "yeomen (F) and Marines (F)"—was changed in 1925 to limit eligibility to "male citizens."<sup>25</sup> The Navy Department could no longer enlist women without express Congressional approval.

But there is some evidence that the Army at this time was at least thinking about possible roles that women might play in future military conflicts. Both the Phipps Plan, submitted to the War Department in 1926, and the Hughes Plan, presented in 1928, "envisioned a women's corps that would be in the Army rather than attached to it as an auxiliary." In 1939 a plan completed by the Army personnel staff at the request of the Army chief of staff called for a women's corps "patterned after the all-male Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)" with women in a civilian status attached to the military (similar to the status of the women nurses in the nineteenth century) rather than as members with rank and full military status. However, all of these plans were filed away and the Army took no action to implement any of them during this time. Thus on the eve of World War II, when the US armed forces were faced once more with involvement in global hostilities, the situation again was one of a small military force that needed to be expanded rapidly, a serious manpower shortage, and no women except nurses "on board."<sup>26</sup>

Principally to help alleviate the shortage of manpower in certain needed areas (particularly in clerical skills, but in other fields as well), women were taken into the armed services, this time in all branches. Women's "line" (nonmedical) components of the services (each headed by a female director or adviser, her title varying from service to service) were established at this time. The first service to take this step was the Army. Legislation sponsored by Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers was passed in 1942 (P.L. 554) to establish the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), a small group of women attached to, but not in, the Army. It is worth noting that Congresswoman Rogers wanted to give women in the Army full, not auxiliary, military status. However, some Army officials disagreed. In a report to the chief of staff on the question of women's organizational status, the assistant chief of staff for personnel wrote, "the purpose of this study . . . is to permit the organization of a women's force along the lines which meet with War Department approval, so that when it is forced upon us, as it undoubtedly will be, we shall be able to run it our way." Thus, "the War Department's unwillingness to go the whole way and provide women with full status, combined with opposition from members of Congress to the idea, convinced Rogers that compromise on this point was the only way to get any legislation at all."<sup>27</sup>

There turned out to be many problems with the auxiliary type of structure, however. Particularly troublesome was the lack of military control over members in an auxiliary, but there were other problems as well.

From the very beginning, the auxiliary status did not work. . . . Its members did Army jobs in lieu of soldiers but were administered under a separate, parallel set of regulations. [Their] legal status was dubious, and there was no legally binding contract that could prevent a woman from leaving anytime she chose to. . . . If they went overseas, WAACs did not have the same legal protection as the men, nor were they entitled to the same benefits if injured. Under the WAAC, military women were not entitled to the same pay as their male counterparts, to entitlements for dependents, or to military rank.<sup>28</sup>

In 1943, after much debate in Congress, another bill was passed. It established the Women's Army Corps (WAC), whose members would have full military status. Most members of the WAAC joined the WAC, and additional civilian women were recruited into the WAC as well.

Meanwhile, the Navy was faced with similar manpower shortages and critically needed skills.

In January 1942, seeing the handwriting on the bulkhead, the Bureau of Personnel recommended to the Secretary of the Navy that Congress be requested to authorize creation of a women's organization. The Secretary agreed but made it quite clear that he wanted the Navy women in the Reserve, not in an auxiliary such as the Army was proposing. . . . Right up to the last, an attempt was made to end-run the Secretary of the Navy on this point by getting the President to favor an auxiliary. . . . It was only through the intercession of Mrs Roosevelt with the President that the Navy Secretary got the nod for a Women's Naval Reserve.<sup>29</sup>

In July 1942 P.L. 689 established the Navy Women's Reserve, integrated at the start as a part of the Naval Reserve and not a separate "women's corps" like the WAC in the Army structure. The Navy women were, however, soon known by the acronym WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service), thus establishing at least the perception of a separate women's organization. The Marine Corps Women's Reserve was also established by P.L. 689; they were known as Women Marines. In November 1942 the US Coast Guard Women's Reserve was established by P.L. 773. Their acronym, SPARs, came from the Coast Guard motto *Semper Paratus*—Always Ready. (The title of "reservist" is a somewhat confusing one here. Although for organizational purposes they were in the reserve component of their respective service branches, virtually all of these women reservists were called to serve on active duty during this time.) Following World War II, when the US Air Force was established as a separate branch of the armed forces, an office of director, Women in the Air Force (WAF) (headed by a female colonel), was set up by the Air Force even though the law itself (Title 3 of the Women's Armed Services' Integration Act of 1948) did not require it to do so. Organizationally, women in the Air Force were airmen and US Air Force officers (rather than WAF airmen and WAF officers) right from the very beginning, although they were perhaps not perceived in this way. "Most male officers, and many female officers . . . faced with the day-to-day decisions [and] trained in Army traditions found old habits hard to break.

Instinctively, they thought of women as a separate category of people."<sup>30</sup> This perception came to be both legally and institutionally reinforced as the various women's directors offices continued to function in the military from the 1940s until the 1970s.

Over the course of World War II, about 350,000 women served in the United States military. They performed in a variety of roles, including medical and administrative jobs, as well as being pilots, truck drivers, airplane mechanics, air traffic controllers, naval air navigators, metalsmiths, and electricians.<sup>31</sup>

Unlike its World War II allies, the United States chose not to utilize women in combat roles. The importance and the reverberations of this decision would be felt throughout the twentieth century. Service policy and subsequent legislation explicitly prevented women from volunteering for or performing combat roles, or, in the case of women in the World War II Navy, from serving in overseas combat areas. The Army, however, thought the latter was permissible; many WACs were assigned to duty overseas during World War II. Rather than engaging in combat herself, it was felt that the important job for a woman in the military in World War II was to "free a man to fight"; that is, to perform a support role in the military so that a man could be released to perform a combat role. This particular belief had actually begun with the first use of uniformed women in line specialties two decades earlier, but it came into its own during World War II and was a frequently used recruiting technique until its effectiveness was undercut by resentment on the part of both men and women. Even though its overt use was discontinued, the idea itself persisted.<sup>32</sup>

Meanwhile, the issue of women and the draft continued to surface. Two large US allies (the Soviet Union and Great Britain) were conscripting women as well as men and were using both in combat roles. At the same time, American men were being drafted for the armed forces under the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 while all women in the US armed forces were volunteers. With the "free a man to fight" strategy, the impetus was not on utilizing women in combat roles, but on using them to fill personnel shortages in other areas, especially in medical and support roles. Attempts to address severe needs in these areas were reflected in three formal proposals for a draft of women: in 1942 within the War Department (to draft a half-million women per year for the next three years); in 1944 when legislation was introduced into Congress to draft unemployed single women (between the ages of 20 and 35) rather than drafting older married men (fathers in particular); and in 1945 when the Nurses Selective Service Bill passed the House. Even though there appeared to be public support for the idea—78 percent of Americans believed that single women should be drafted before any more fathers were taken, and even single women agreed by a three-to-one majority—legislation to draft American women was never enacted.<sup>33</sup>

Fueled by the Berlin crisis in 1948, the major piece of legislation regarding women and their roles within the military that did become law during this

period came after the close of World War II. Despite the record of women's service, the debate in Congress continued over their status vis-à-vis the military. The major ideological breakthroughs regarding women and the military that came about during World War II were that women could be in the armed forces (wear uniforms and have military rank), and that their contributions could be important and continuing ones. But this institutionalized and continuing contribution of women contained an important caveat: their numbers and roles in the military were to be limited. What was needed was a small group of women, established and on board in all the military services, which could serve as the basis for the expansion of womanpower in the event of another national emergency.

Public Law 625, the Women's Armed Services' Integration Act of 1948 (called the Integration Act), was thus an important legislative and ideological turning point in several ways. Whatever the reasons behind it—a mobilization base for womanpower was the primary idea—the law established for the first time a permanent role for women in the nation's armed forces. This institutionalization of their role meant that women would never again be mobilized and then immediately discharged following a war or crisis while men continued to serve at all times. Yet while this act established the role of women in the military as a continuing one, it also set the boundaries of that role. It imposed a 2-percent ceiling on the number of women who could be on active duty in each branch of the armed forces, limited each service to only one woman line colonel or Navy captain, excluded women entirely from flag rank (general and admiral), established that women's promotion lists would be separate from men's for all services except the Air Force, set differing enlistment standards and dependency entitlements for men and women, and

authorized the service Secretaries to prescribe the military authority that women might exercise and the kind of military duty to which they might be assigned provided, in the case of the Navy and Air Force, that they "may not be assigned to duty in aircraft while such aircraft are engaged in combat missions"; nor, in the case of the Navy, "may they be assigned to duty on vessels of the Navy except hospital ships and naval transports."<sup>34</sup>

Importantly, nearly every one of P.L. 625's provisions restricting the utilization of women would come under debate over the next few years and some would be changed, either by legislation or by policy modification.

The post-World War II era included the Berlin crisis, the Korean War, the cold war, and the Vietnam War; and throughout the 1950s and 1960s, women continued to serve in the armed forces, primarily in medical, administrative, communications, training, and logistics roles. Their numbers remained steady at less than 2 percent of the total force. During this time, three particular events were to have important implications: the utilization of women during the Korean War, the establishment of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), and the passage of P.L. 90-130 in 1967 (which altered several provisions of P.L. 625).

In 1950 the war in Korea necessitated once again a substantial increase in the size of US forces. Personnel strength levels had been sharply cut back with demobilization at the close of World War II. The draft of American men had continued, but now draft calls had to be increased. Selected reserves were also called up. There were 22,000 women volunteers in the armed forces, about one-third of whom were in health career fields. The need for nurses was especially critical; in fact, most military women who served in the Far East, especially in Korea, during this time were nurses. Both voluntary and involuntary recalls of WAC reservists to active duty also occurred during this period. Moreover, in response to a request from Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower Anna Rosenberg, Congress temporarily removed the 2-percent ceiling on women. However, efforts to recruit increased numbers of qualified women volunteers met with continued shortfalls throughout this period.<sup>35</sup>

To help address these pressing personnel needs during the Korean War, to help the services recruit more women, and to serve as a public relations vehicle for women's programs, DACOWITS was formed in 1951. The secretary of defense appointed 50 prominent women from business, the professions, public service, and civilian leadership. The DACOWITS committee still exists, but its role has evolved into one that places, by comparison, somewhat less emphasis on public relations and somewhat more emphasis on its advisory function. It attempts to identify issues of concern to women in the military and to be an advocate for those concerns to the secretary of defense.

It was partially due to the efforts of DACOWITS members in 1967 that legislative relief for military women from some of the promotion restrictions of the 1948 Integration Act came about; but the legislation that ultimately became P.L. 90-130 was drafted principally for other reasons. In the mid-1960s, as US involvement in Vietnam increased, public opposition to a draft also increased. Between 1964 and 1966, various studies were conducted to look at the desirability of increasing the number of women in the armed forces up to the 2-percent ceiling. In 1967 the President's Commission on the Selective Service recommended that "opportunities should be made available for more women to serve in the Armed Forces, thus reducing the number of men who must be involuntarily called to duty." That same year, the Department of Defense (DOD) directed that three steps be taken to help ease the critical manpower shortage the services faced: (1) enlistment standards for males would be lowered in order for the services to take in 100,000 men who would not have qualified under previous standards; (2) a civilian substitution program would convert some positions in military support activities from military to civilian ones; and (3) the number of women in the military services would be increased.<sup>36</sup>

Among its 1967 provisions, Public Law 90-130 removed the 2-percent ceiling on female participation in the armed forces. However, the authority to prescribe the numbers and percentages of women in the military was

merely *transferred* at this time from the letter of the law to the discretion of the individual service secretaries; limits could be—and in fact were—still imposed. In addition, the 1967 law removed the restrictions that had prohibited the promotion of women to the ranks of general and admiral.

Important to the bill's passage were the military manpower crunch, public opposition to a draft, and promotion bottlenecks for military women. The Integration Act had placed a ceiling on their promotions, which had in turn forced attrition for many women officers, especially those who had been commissioned in World War II; there was no place for these women to advance in the organization, so they had to get out. This was particularly true for the Navy, but it had a serious impact on the other services as well.

Although the idea of women as generals and admirals was not an entirely new one, it was not a particularly popular one at the time. Public Law 90-130 nevertheless allowed for increased promotional opportunities, and the first promotions of women to brigadier general occurred in 1970. By 1982, all of the services had a woman brigadier general or admiral (one star); by 1984, all had at least one woman two star: Maj Gen Mary E. Clarke (USA), Maj Gen Jeanne Holm (USAF), Maj Gen Norma Brown (USAF), and Rear Adm Grace Hopper (USN). The total number of women who have been promoted to general or admiral since the law first permitted it in 1967 has been minuscule; in 1988, nine active duty general officers were women.<sup>37</sup>

American military involvement in Vietnam during the 1960s and 1970s included the utilization of women from the first days to the last. Most of the women who saw service in Southeast Asia during this time were nurses, but some women in the women's "line" components who had administrative, logistical, and other specialties served there as well. Although it is difficult to establish exact numbers, one source states that 7,500 American military women served in Southeast Asia over the course of the Vietnam War. Again, as had been the case in all wars in which women had served in or with the US military, some women returned with combat decorations, some returned with wounds (physical and/or psychological), and some did not return at all.<sup>38</sup>

As US involvement in Southeast Asia wound down, draft calls for men were first lowered, then reduced to zero. The draft was finally terminated in January 1973. Since then, all service members—both women and men—in the US armed forces have been volunteers.

The advent of the all-volunteer force precipitated a series of changes for women in the military. In some respects, the 1970s can be considered a *revolutionary* time for military women because a number of significant changes in policies relating to them occurred very quickly during that decade. Channels for these changes included DOD policy modification, legislative enactment, and (for the first time) judicial mandate.

Yet in other important ways, the 1970s can be considered an *evolutionary* decade since many of the issues dealt with were ones that had a policy history and had been simmering for a long while. Moreover, these issues continued to be raised as areas of concern in the 1980s.

To examine the critical events of the 1970s, it is helpful to categorize them into five principal areas: (1) special advisory committees, task forces, and organizational monitors; (2) marriage and family policy; (3) numbers; (4) training; and (5) military roles.

### **Special Advisory Committees, Task Forces, and Organizational Monitors**

Between 1973 and 1978, all of the services phased out their women directors offices. Administratively, this was most problematic for the Army since the Women's Army Corps was legally mandated in the 1948 Integration Act and specific legislation was required to terminate it. The other services had never been legally required to set up an office for a director of women, but each had done so. These were advisory rather than command positions; but the women officers appointed to them usually had direct access to their service chiefs on issues concerning all military women.

Disestablishment of the women directors offices, especially the WAC, was met with mixed reactions. Objections were raised by many military women who felt that loss of the women's director positions meant the loss of a significant base of influence at top levels of the military organization. There was also the perceived loss of a women's support network and, especially in the case of the WAC, an institutional identity—and the high esprit de corps associated with them. Proponents, however, viewed the demise of the structure (dubbed the "petticoat channel") as a movement away from a separate and unequal status and toward one of fuller incorporation into the organization itself. The latter view eventually proved correct, although some lingering concerns remained. Policies and situations of concern to military women didn't go away; and the DACOWITS (the volunteer civilian advisory group) alone was left as an institutional resource for Department of Defense policymakers.

Thus lacking a mechanism for uniformed military expertise on issues that had especial impact upon women, the DOD subsequently adopted an ad hoc (as needed) strategy and structure (a review board, a committee, and a task force) to deal with many of these questions. In 1977 a Committee on Women in the NATO Forces was established. This group—composed of representatives of eleven NATO member countries (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States)—is "a consultative body on policy concerning women in the armed forces of the alliance (whose) aim is to encourage the most effective utilization of the capabilities of women in the services."<sup>39</sup> Also in 1977, legislation (P.L. 95-202, Section 401) granting veterans status to the Women's Air Force Service Pilots of World War II became part of the impetus for DOD Directive 1000.20, *Active Duty Service Determinations for Civilian or Contractual Groups*, in 1979. This directive established a Department of Defense



Civilian/Military Service Review Board charged with reviewing applications from groups of civilian or contractual personnel and determining "whether the service rendered by a group shall be considered active military service for the purpose of all laws administered by the Veterans Administration."<sup>40</sup>

In 1983, the Veterans Administration Advisory Committee on Women Veterans was created—initially as an internal advisory group within the Veterans Administration (VA), then subsequently "mandated by Congress under Title III—Women Veterans, Public Law 98-160."<sup>41</sup> And in 1984 the secretary of defense established the Task Force on Equity for Women, which "will evaluate the effects of defense policies, programs, and practices on opportunities for women and will recommend changes where appropriate."<sup>42</sup> This five-member task force is chaired by the assistant secretary of defense for manpower, installations, and logistics.

Thus there is a continuing concern for institutional forums to deal with organizational issues that particularly involve military women. The major ongoing policy question here is, what mechanism(s) and organizational structures should be used to identify and deal with these issues?

## **Marriage and Family Policy**

Official policies pertaining to marriage and to dependent children for military women had been evolving since World War II. The initial question was whether a woman's decision to marry would either render her ineligible for enlistment in the first place or, if she were already in the military, make her ineligible to remain in uniform. Marriage was not necessarily a bar to enlistment or retention for women during World War II, but it did subsequently become one.

Female recruiting shortfalls in the 1960s, coupled with the services' approval to release women from their enlistment obligations due to marriage, translated into significant womanpower losses for the military. A policy change to retain married servicewomen reduced female attrition as expected; but it also subsequently increased the number of married women in the service (many of whom had military husbands), and this in turn increased the number of requests for both military spouses to be assigned to the same location. Marriage and retention in the service for military women were no longer mutually exclusive statuses, but this situation had now raised some not entirely anticipated organizational consequences.<sup>43</sup>

Even though marriage was now permissible, the services continued to think of married servicemen and married servicewomen differently, especially with regard to benefits and dependents. Although the DACOWITS had long questioned this seeming inequity, and legislation addressing this had even been introduced into Congress, in the end it was the Supreme Court that decided the matter. In 1973, in *Frontiero v. Richardson*, the Supreme Court ruled that it was unconstitutional for the armed forces to require a servicewoman to prove that her civilian spouse and/or unmarried

minor children were dependent upon her for more than half of their support unless they required the same thing of servicemen (whose civilian wives and unmarried minor children were *automatically* classified as dependents by the armed forces). Thus required to equalize their rules for dependents' entitlements, the services changed their policies so that servicewomen were subject to the same treatment in this regard as were servicemen.

Marriage and dependency entitlements (especially if these were for a spouse) were one thing, and child custody and pregnancy quite another, to the military. A 1951 Executive Order (EO 10240) signed by President Harry S. Truman gave the services *permission* to discharge a woman if she became pregnant, gave birth to a child, or became a parent by adoption or a stepparent; the services took it as a *mandate*. Waivers to the minor child custody policy were given to military women in the 1950s and 1960s but often reluctantly and always on a case-by-case basis. In the late 1960s, military women for whom child custody presented a potential forced choice between their children and their military careers began to file suit on this question, claiming a violation of their 14th Amendment equal protection rights, the same argument used later in *Frontiero v. Richardson*. But in the early 1970s, the military rescinded the minor children discharge policy for military women, rendering these cases moot.<sup>44</sup>

This did not lay to rest other implications of this issue. In June 1985 a case with a nine-year legal history was brought before a federal judge in New York. In his ruling, Judge John T. Curtain of the US District Court in Buffalo "upheld the right of the Air Force and Army to ban single parents from enlisting."<sup>45</sup> And changes to policy regarding minor child custody and single parenting have not always received universal support, both because of perceived implications for possible assignment and mobility restrictions and because they have opened up the lid on a "related matter"—pregnancy.

The issue of pregnant military women was, and still is, a highly emotionally charged one. Rather than automatically discharging a woman from the service when proof of pregnancy was discovered, as had been the case, the services began in 1971 to go to a policy of waivers of discharge for pregnancy. They also changed the enlistment rules so that women with children were no longer automatically excluded from entering the service. Subsequently, although some women with children were seeking waivers to stay in, the services were still experiencing a loss of 6 percent of their enlisted women (about 3,000) annually to pregnancy and parenthood, which resulted in a move by the DOD to declare the involuntary separation with waiver policy no longer "viable" and to instruct the services to develop and implement policies of *voluntary* separation for pregnancy and parenthood.<sup>46</sup> The services objected, citing concerns regarding availability for deployment and potential loss of duty time, but were directed to comply with a voluntary separation policy by 1975. Meanwhile, litigation brought against the services by military women on this issue was in the courts. In 1976, in *Crawford v. Cushman*, the 2d District Court ruled that a Marine Corps regulation requiring the discharge of a pregnant woman Marine

violated the Fifth Amendment due process clause because it set up an irrefutable presumption that any pregnant woman in uniform was permanently unfit for duty.

In the late 1970s, shortly after the decision was made to permit women who became pregnant to remain in the military, maternity uniforms were developed by each service and were made available for individual purchase. In 1982 the Army approved a "maternity work uniform," consisting of shirt and trousers with a camouflage pattern, and scheduled it to be available in the Army supply system by 1985. But this time, rather than being an item for personal purchase, the maternity work uniform was considered an item of *organizational equipment*. Since "organizational items belong to the unit, not the soldier, and are repaired and replaced at government expense," such a move could be perceived as an attempt at an organizational adaptation to the fact that "approximately 4-5 percent of the female force is pregnant at any one time."<sup>47</sup>

The pregnancy issue has raised concerns for the armed forces in three major areas: the potential availability of pregnant military women for mobilization, "work arounds" (circumstances where people do not carry their own share of responsibilities in the work group situation), and health care issues. Increasingly, attention is being paid to a scientific analysis of these concerns rather than accepting "conventional wisdom" on these matters—which may sometimes be factually erroneous—as a basis for making policy decisions. For example, in 1985 the Army Medical Department announced plans regarding a study to be undertaken on the health status of women in the Army. It was directed by Brig Gen Connie L. Slewitzke (chief, Army Nurse Corps) and conducted by the US Army Health Care Studies and Clinical Investigation Activity at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. The study focused on pregnancy and other female-specific health issues and examined the utilization and perceptions of the Army health care system by both male and female soldiers. It also concentrated on "the perceptions of company commanders and first sergeants concerning differences in health problems of men and women."<sup>48</sup> Another study that would "monitor thousands of pregnancies and major gynecological operations (during 1985-86) in an effort to determine the quality of care that servicewomen and female dependents are receiving in military (Army, Air Force, and Navy) hospitals," was coordinated by the Defense Department's Health Affairs Office.<sup>49</sup> In 1988 the Pentagon's Health Program Review and Evaluation Office conducted the first worldwide survey of military women's health care concerns. An 86-item questionnaire on OB/GYN care and access to health care services was sent to a random sample of Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps women.<sup>50</sup>

In summary then, family policy issues have received increased organizational attention in the military of recent years largely because of the interest of particular groups such as DACOWITS and the Armed Services YMCA. The influence of congressional advocates—especially Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Representatives Henry B. Gonzalez (D-Tex.) and

Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.)—was also very important, as was the perceived linkage between the family and the individual servicemember's morale and reenlistment intent.<sup>51</sup>

The Military Family Resource Center (MFRC), originally established as a demonstration project in 1980 (in response to a 1979 General Accounting Office—GAO—recommendation) and carried forward by the Armed Services YMCA, became a permanent organizational element of DOD in October 1984 when it became part of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs. Later, the 1986 Defense Authorization Bill contained provisions for the transfer of the MFRC to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management and Personnel and for the creation of an additional office—the Office of Family Policy—to be established under the assistant secretary of defense. It is especially important in the context of the present discussion to point out that the archival (the collection of studies and information on military family life), the program monitoring and coordinating, and the policy-recommending functions of these offices were set up to provide support and advocacy to the families of *all* military members, not just the families of military women.<sup>52</sup> In 1986 the US Army began a major five-year research effort to collect baseline data on the Army family and to provide policy recommendations in key family areas.

These family policy questions of marriage, pregnancy, parenthood, family services, and joint-spouse assignments are only just beginning to be seriously addressed. The major ongoing policy questions for this set of issues are: How should such concerns be dealt with, and what organizational implications do they raise?

## Numbers

Perhaps the most important change for women in the military in the decade of the 1970s was the dramatic increase in their numbers. This buildup of womanpower, most dramatic, virtually overnight in the early 1970s, began to level off in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

In the early 1970s, with the legislation authorizing the draft about to expire, the DOD established the Central All-Volunteer Task Force to examine various alternatives for fielding an all-volunteer military force. In 1971 the DOD directed the task force to study the utilization of military women in order to "provide a contingency option for meeting all-volunteer force objectives by increasing the use of women to offset any shortage of men."<sup>53</sup> In 1972 a special congressional subcommittee on military manpower held hearings on the role of women in the military. The committee's final report noted "that in an atmosphere of a zero draft environment or an

all-volunteer military force, women could and should play a more important role."<sup>54</sup> Subsequently, the services were directed to develop contingency plans to increase the use of women in the military. The head of the task force suggested that these increases include a 40-percent increase for the Marine Corps and a doubling of the number of women in the Army, Air Force, and Navy in 1977.<sup>55</sup>

As it turned out, these contingency plans became action plans: the services increased the number of women even more than anticipated between 1972 and 1976. By the late 1970s, the expansion rates had slackened; but the number of women in the military continued to increase.

TABLE 1  
Female Military Personnel on Active  
Duty in the US Armed Forces

<i>Date</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Active Duty Personnel*</i>
31 May 1945	266,256	12,124,418
30 Jun 1948	14,458	1,445,910
30 Jun 1949	18,081	1,615,360
30 Jun 1950	22,069	1,460,261
30 Jun 1951	39,625	3,249,455
30 Jun 1952	45,934	3,635,912
30 Jun 1953	45,485	3,555,067
30 Jun 1954	38,600	3,302,104
30 Jun 1955	35,191	2,935,107
30 Jun 1956	33,646	2,806,441
30 Jun 1957	32,173	2,795,798
30 Jun 1958	31,176	2,600,581
30 Jun 1959	31,718	2,565,000
30 Jun 1960	31,550	2,476,435
30 Jun 1961	32,071	2,483,771
30 Jun 1962	32,213	2,807,819
30 Jun 1963	30,771	2,699,677
30 Jun 1964	29,795	2,687,409
30 Jun 1965	30,610	2,655,389
30 Jun 1966	32,589	3,094,058
30 Jun 1967	35,173	3,376,880
30 Jun 1968	38,397	3,547,902
30 Jun 1969	39,506	3,460,162
30 Jun 1970	41,479	3,066,294
30 Jun 1971	42,775	2,714,727
30 Jun 1972	45,033	2,323,079
30 Jun 1973	55,402	2,252,810
30 Jun 1974	74,715	2,162,005
30 Jun 1975	96,868	2,128,120
30 Jun 1976	109,133	2,081,910
30 Sep 1976	11,753	2,083,581
30 Sep 1977	18,966	2,074,543

TABLE 1, continued

<i>Date</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Active Duty Personnel*</i>
30 Sep 1978	34,312	2,062,404
30 Sep 1979	51,082	2,027,494
30 Sep 1980	71,418	2,050,627
30 Sep 1981	84,651	2,082,560
30 Sep 1982	88,599	2,108,612
30 Sep 1983	197,878	2,123,349
30 Sep 1984	100,827	2,138,157
31 Dec 1985	213,357	2,150,379
30 Sep 1986	218,889	2,169,112
30 Sep 1987	223,805	2,174,219
30 Jun 1988	220,476	2,104,307

\*For comparison purposes.

Note: Totals include officer and enlisted personnel.

Sources: 1945-1984 figures taken from Department of Defense, *Selected Manpower Statistics: Fiscal Year 1984*, pages 55-57, 78-79, and derived from pages 20-23. 1985-1986 figures from Department of Defense, *Selected Manpower Statistics: 30 Sep 1986*, pages 5, 16. 1987 figures from Department of Defense, *Selected Manpower Statistics: 30 Sep 1987*, pages 5, 18. 1988 figures from Department of Defense, *Selected Manpower Statistics: 30 Jun 1988*, pages 5, 16.

The expansion of the numbers of women in the military at this time was prompted by two significant events: the demise of the draft as a source of military manpower and the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment by Congress in 1972. It was the perception of military decision makers that both these events would have significant implications for policies concerning the utilization of women in the armed forces.<sup>56</sup>

All during the time that the numbers of women in the military were increasing, much study and assessment of this phenomenon was going on. An underlying assumption was that there was an upper limit on the number of women that could be incorporated into the military—due to certain restrictions—and that it was important to determine exactly what this number was. Among the restrictions on the utilization of women were those statutory ones posed by the combat prohibitions in Title 10 (the 1948 Integration Act) and certain conditions and policy restraints in the services themselves, especially “facilities limitations” (the lack of accommodations for women in certain locations) and particularly in the case of the Navy, the “rotation base”—the number of shore jobs that women could occupy were it not for the policy that these jobs must be saved for men returning from sea duty. In the late 1970s, another potentially limiting factor was identified: the effect of the increased utilization of women on the essence of the military mission itself—combat effectiveness. The assumption was that a certain percentage of women in a unit would be likely to have a negative effect on effectiveness; and there was an effort to determine just what this number was. The Army’s data from two of its own studies, however, failed to find an adverse effect.<sup>57</sup>

Yet the concern with the questions "what are the limits on the utilization of women?" and "what are the effects of the increased utilization of women on the military's mission?" continued into the 1980s. In a 1981 movement subsequently known as "Womanpause," the DOD announced a reappraisal of accession goals and policies regarding women in the military and a subsequent "pause" on recruiting to assess the impact of women on military readiness. Upon the completion of this DOD policy review in 1981, female recruiting levels were negotiated between DOD and each of the services.<sup>58</sup>

In January 1982 the secretary of defense sent memos to the service secretaries. They read, in part, "qualified women are essential to obtaining the numbers of quality people required to maintain the readiness of our forces"; and they instructed the service secretaries to "personally review" policies to see that women were not discriminated against in recruiting or career opportunities. The Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1985, required the Air Force to increase the number of women recruits. The percentage of new Air Force recruits who were women would go from 14 percent in 1985 to 19 percent in 1987 to 22 percent by the end of fiscal year 1988. The Air Force balked at this idea and was eventually able to get the 1987 requirement canceled and the 1988 requirement delayed.<sup>59</sup>

In summary, the questions of "how many women can the military utilize?" and "what are some of the organizational effects of the incorporation of increased numbers and percentages of women in the armed forces?" are not new issues but *important ongoing policy concerns*.

## **Training**

While the numbers of women in the armed forces in the 1970s was increasing, training and job assignment opportunities for women were also increasing. The route to an officer's commission for most young men—the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program in colleges and universities—was opened to women on a trial basis in the 1960s. By 1972, all of the services had women enrolled in their ROTC programs; and by the end of the decade, significant numbers of women were obtaining their commissions via this route.<sup>60</sup> By the mid-1970s, NCO leadership schools and academies, schools for drill sergeants, officer candidate programs, and service schools for senior officers had been opened to women; and women had begun to appear on the staffs and faculties of these schools as well.

Enlistment standards moved in the direction of equalization for men and women,<sup>61</sup> and basic training courses were gender integrated (with the exception of the Marine Corps) in the mid-1970s. (The Army reverted to separate basic training courses for men and women in the mid-1980s.) Mandatory weapons training for most military women was also begun in the mid-1970s. All of these changes came about through policy modifications designed to specifically allow women to participate in these programs.

Legislative action was required for the admission of women to the military service academies. By 1975 two federal academies—the US Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York, and the US Coast Guard Academy at New London, Connecticut—had opened their doors to women. Policies and feelings on this at the military service academies (the Army at West Point, New York; the Navy at Annapolis, Maryland; and the Air Force at Colorado Springs, Colorado) were, however, another matter. In the early 1970s, women desiring admission to the service academies (who had been nominated by members of Congress only to have their application returned unconsidered) filed suit against the services. The service academies objected to the admission of women because facilities would have to be modified to accommodate women, the program itself might have to be changed, and, most importantly, the business of the service academies was to train leaders for combat. The academies argued that since women were forbidden by law from assuming combat duties, then it was inappropriate for them to receive training at the military academies. But a GAO survey of the types of jobs that service academy graduates had held revealed that a substantial number of them had never had a combat assignment. The service academies were therefore not in the *exclusive* business of training leaders for combat jobs.<sup>62</sup>

Public Law 94-106, signed by President Gerald Ford in 1975, admitted women to the nation's three military service academies for the first time. The legislation became effective in the fall of 1976, thus making the class of 1980 the first gender-integrated academy classes. Facility problems proved to be few, and no changes in the academic programs were required as the result of admitting women. Physical training requirements, however, did have to reflect lower standards for women. (Some of these standards were later raised as subsequent women, helped by Title 9 physical education and training programs in their high schools, were admitted by the academies. Nevertheless, different physical standards and qualifications for women remain in effect at the service academies.)

Training opportunities and standards for military women are an ongoing policy concern. One question is, What are the causes and effects of the *average* lower physical ability of military women on their job performance, and how does this translate to the question of organizational effectiveness? A second major question links the training and utilization issues: What kind(s) of training shall women receive for what kind(s) of military jobs?

## **Military Roles**

The expanding numbers of women in the military (especially occurring, as this phenomenon did, within a climate of expanding occupational options for women in general) inevitably raised the issue of types of jobs open to women. After women had performed a wide variety of military roles in World War II, they had been relegated to only a very few types of jobs throughout



the two decades that followed. However, during the late 1960s and early 1970s, a significant shift in service philosophy occurred. Suddenly, military women were no longer to be solely utilized in health care occupations or as "typewriter soldiers"; now they could be, and were, assigned to nontraditional roles such as maintenance, mechanical, electrical, and skilled craft fields. (Strictly speaking, however, given their history of participation in these job areas in World War II, such occupations were not really "nontraditional" for women at all.) Essentially overnight, job prospects for women went from limited openings in a very few fields to an ever-increasing number of jobs available in virtually all noncombat positions in the military. In 1972, for example, 90 percent of all enlisted women in the military were classified as being in "traditional" fields (especially administration and health care); in 1980, only 54 percent were so classified.<sup>63</sup> This opening up of roles for women coincided with the end of a military draft for men and the introduction of an all-volunteer armed force.

While this expansion of roles most particularly affected the career fields and choices available to enlisted women, women officers also became eligible for some new opportunities at this time. In the mid-1970s for instance, opportunities for women to command and supervise men (rather than exercising authority solely over other women) were approved. In the late 1970s, the separate promotion lists for male and female officers were eliminated, thus making women compete for the first time with men for promotion. This made some of the senior-ranking women quite concerned when they wondered, not without cause, whether their historical exclusion from certain types of job opportunities and assignments—and their consequent lack of experience because of this—might handicap them when competing for promotion with men who have had these opportunities and experiences.

Perhaps the three most significant areas of changing roles for military women during the 1970s occurred in their assignment to aircraft, missile, and seagoing specialist positions. This was particularly important since (1) these represented the core roles (the central activities) of the Air Force and Navy, and (2) the 1948 Integration Act legacy, which had barred women from duty aboard Navy ships and from Navy and Air Force aircraft engaged in combat missions, still remained as legal restrictions (Title 10, U.S.C., Sections 6015 and 8549) to the assignment and utilization of women in those services.

Yet, women pinned on Naval aviator wings in 1973; and women began to fly in Army aviation specialties in 1974, principally as helicopter pilots. Women pilots flew for the Air Force in 1977, but only in certain types of aircraft: weather, reconnaissance, tanker, personnel and cargo transport, and flying hospitals (medical evacuation airplanes). Gradually, the Air Force opened other types of opportunities to women pilots: the Airborne Warning and Control Squadron (AWACS) in 1982; the RC-135 reconnaissance and EC-130 electronic countermeasure aircraft in 1986. Air Force fighter and bomber aircraft (designated as "combat aircraft") are still off

limits to women, although Air Force women can serve as instructor pilots. Women in other NATO nations are beginning to be trained as combat fighter pilots,<sup>64</sup> and in 1986 the US Navy had its first women test pilots.<sup>65</sup> In 1988 all aviator positions on reconnaissance and electronic warfare support flying billets were opened to women.<sup>66</sup>

It must be emphasized that only a very small number of women (a few hundred) were, and are, admitted into aviation specialties in the US armed forces. Among the reasons for this are the restrictions on their utilization in such roles, the consequent difficulty in getting and maintaining the required number of flying hours, and the possibility of limited military career options for women in aviation fields.

Title 10 contained no provisions to exclude women from operating missile systems, most probably because large intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) with long-range combat capabilities were not in the weapon systems inventories of the armed forces when the combat exclusion provisions for women were codified into US law in 1948. In the post-World War II era, however, several kinds of missile systems became important parts of the US military arsenal. In 1977 the secretary of the Air Force opened the missile launch career field to women, allowing them to be part of four-person launch crews on the liquid-fueled Titan missiles. However, the more modern Minuteman solid-fuel missiles had only two-person crews, and concern was raised over "stress and privacy" problems that might arise with a mixed-gender crew. In 1980 the Air Force surveyed male Minuteman crew members (and their wives) to determine opinions regarding women in Minuteman crews. The negative responses to this survey question helped to keep women out of Minuteman crew positions until a later Air Force study on the utilization of military women in such roles led to a decision to incorporate them into these crews beginning in 1985.<sup>67</sup> The decision was also made to train women as Peacekeeper (MX) ICBM crew members. In the case of both Minuteman and Peacekeeper, however (both two-person crews), women launch officers could initially serve only with other women launch officers. In part because of complaints from men that such a situation resulted in the women launch officers "not carrying an equal share of the duty," mixed-gender crew assignments for ICBMs became the rule beginning 1 January 1988.<sup>68</sup>

Another new Air Force missile, the ground-launched cruise missile (GLCM), will have women as crew members. Unlike the domestic land-based ICBMs, however, GLCMs can be operated from a mobile platform that can be forward deployed in a field environment. But once again, as is the case for women pilots, the number of women on missile launch crews is very small.

Between 1984 and 1985, the Air Force opened not only missile launch crew positions to women but another "nontraditional" role (security police jobs) as well.<sup>69</sup> And in 1988 "more than 2,700 positions for women in the Air Force Red Horse (construction) and mobile aerial port squadrons" were opened.<sup>70</sup> An interesting historical footnote here is the fact that the same

1985 force composition study that led to the recommendation for removing the requirement for a 22-percent female recruit rate in 1987 also led to a revision in the Air Force's combat exclusion policy that opened up about 800 jobs to women (principally flying and crewing C-130 and EC-130 aircraft and serving at forward air control posts and munitions storage sites).<sup>71</sup>

But while flying aircraft and launching missiles are jobs actually performed by relatively few people—men or women—in the armed forces, duty at sea involves virtually all members of the nation's sea services; all members, that is, except many women in the Navy and Marine Corps who, for the most part, have remained ashore. The 1948 Integration Act had been worded to preclude women from serving on all Naval vessels except hospital ships and transports. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, this exception had made it possible for Navy nurses (as they had in World War II) to serve on hospital ships, this time located in Southeast Asia. But when the last Navy hospital ship was decommissioned in 1971, even this was not possible.

On 7 August 1972, the chief of Naval Operations, Adm Elmo R. Zumwalt, citing "the imminence of an all-volunteer force (which) has heightened the importance of women as a vital personnel resource," announced in Z-Gram 116 that there would be limited entry of enlisted women into all jobs in the Navy, to include the seagoing ratings, and that the USS *Sanctuary* (a hospital ship) would have a gender-integrated crew. Approximately 20 women officers and 53 enlisted women became a part of this ship's crew; most were assigned to the hospital, but some held jobs on the deck and in other areas.<sup>72</sup> The *Sanctuary* was decommissioned in 1975, but the Navy began to assign women to nonocean-going vessels such as tugs and harbor craft.

During 1977 and 1978, Navy officials went to Congress to get an amendment that would allow women to serve on noncombatant ships such as tenders and repair ships. While Congress was considering this matter, Judge John J. Sirica ruled in *Owens v. Brown* that the provisions of the blanket exclusion of Navy women from sea duty contained in Section 6015 were unconstitutional under equal protection rights guaranteed by the Fifth Amendment. Subsequently, Congress approved the Navy's suggested modifications to Section 6015; and in 1978 President Jimmy Carter signed P.L. 95-485, which provided that women in the Navy could be assigned to sea duty aboard noncombatant ships and could be assigned to temporary duty (less than 180 days) aboard combatant ships. At about the same time, the US Coast Guard (under the Department of Transportation rather than the Department of Defense, and thus not subject to Section 6015's restrictions) began assigning mixed-gender crews to its high-endurance cutters. In 1978 the Coast Guard removed all assignment restrictions based on gender. Since then, women have served on, and in some cases commanded, US Coast Guard ships.<sup>73</sup> In December 1987 the Navy approved the assignment of women to ships in its combat logistics force and in 1989

selected its first woman for at-sea command of a commissioned Navy ship.<sup>74</sup> In 1988 the Marine Corps announced that "these female noncommissioned officers . . . will be serving aboard two of the Navy's three (submarine) tenders as part of their Marine security detachments."<sup>75</sup>

In 1973 DOD had recommended repeal of the combat exclusion contained in Title 10; but the issue was dropped when an Army review led the services themselves to suggest that the subject of women in combat was too controversial and that a move to repeal the Title 10 prohibitions might delay passage of the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act to which it was attached.

In 1979 DOD again recommended repeal of the combat exclusion provisions because of the limiting effects they had on Air Force and Navy personnel policy. This time, the proposal was sent to Congress, and the House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee held hearings on it. But rather than debating the need for flexibility in the Army's review, the subcommittee recommended closing 23 job categories to women—job categories that had previously been open to them.<sup>76</sup> However, "in 1985, after a review directed by the Secretary of the Army, many of the job categories closed in 1982 were reopened."<sup>77</sup> And when the Army went to its direct combat probability code (DCPC) in 1983, it discovered that it had on board many women in the "P1" (highest probability of combat) positions—positions that were theoretically closed to them. Transferring these women out of such specialties proved to be more difficult than at first thought. Particularly in Europe, unit commanders wanted them—in part because there were not enough men to fill the vacancies. In 1987 this affected about 250 women assigned to P1 combat units in West Germany, many of whom were subsequently transferred by direct order of the commander, US Army Europe.<sup>78</sup>

For the Navy and Marine Corps, the biggest changes in the "women and combat" issue have come through modification of the Section 6015 legislation and the assignment of women to ships in the Navy's combat logistics force (1987) and as embassy guards in overseas posts (in 1979 and again in 1988) for the Marine Corps.<sup>79</sup> In the 1970s and 1980s, the Air Force expanded its definition of aircraft types its women were allowed to fly and of which intercontinental ballistic missiles they were permitted to launch.

It must be stressed again, however, that important restrictions on women's roles remain in all the services; women as a class are prohibited from performing certain kinds of military jobs ("combat" roles). As this book goes to press, legislation that would open all combat support positions in the military to women, cosponsored by Senators William Proxmire (R-Wis.) and William Cohen (R-Me.), has again been introduced in Congress.<sup>80</sup>

Underlying much of the discussion during this time of expanding roles for women (1970s and 1980s) were of course the combat exclusion provisions contained in the law and, in fact, the definitions of "combat" itself. Two related issues—registration and conscription—were also raised regarding women. Because these issues are of such importance in the

contemporary debate concerning the utilization of women in the military, they will be examined here in greater detail.

As we have seen, the Women's Armed Services' Integration Act of 1948 (the Integration Act) provided a permanent and continuing role for women in the US armed forces. Importantly, however, this act also included three major restrictions: on the rank that women could attain, on the percentage of women in the military, and on the types of duties women could perform. Forty years later, the first two restrictions have been removed but the third one remains. It has come to be known as the "combat exclusion."

Today, all branches of the US armed forces have restrictions on the kinds of jobs that women can perform. Some of these are imposed on the services from "outside"—the statutory restrictions contained in Title 10 of the United States Code (the 1948 Integration Act) while others are imposed from "inside" the organization (the restrictions a particular service sets for itself). Table 2 provides a closer look at these restrictions.

TABLE 2

### Combat Exclusion Laws and Policies Pertaining to the Utilization of Women in the US Armed Forces

1. Statutory provisions on the utilization of women in the military are contained in Title 10 of the United States Code:
  - a. 10 USC Section 8549 prohibits the permanent assignment of women in the Air Force to duty in aircraft engaged in combat missions. (In Section 8067, however, exceptions are made for women who are medical, dental, chaplain, or other "professionals.")
  - b. 10 USC Section 6015 prohibits the permanent assignment of Navy women to duty on vessels or aircraft that engage in combat missions.
  - c. 10 USC Section 3012 gives authority to the Secretary of the Army to assign, detail, and prescribe duties to all members of the Army. (Thus the Army has no statutory limitations on the utilization of women.)
2. In addition to the above restrictions, service policies also limit the utilization of military women:
  - a. The Marine Corps, under the Department of the Navy, follows the restrictions placed on the utilization of women in Section 6015. Also, its policies further restrict women in the Marine Corps from serving in either combat or combat "situations."
  - b. The Army has no statutory restrictions on the utilization of women. However, in 1977, it developed and adopted a Combat Exclusion Policy that prevents women from serving in certain jobs designated as "combat" military occupational specialties. In addition, in 1983 the Army developed a direct combat probability code (DCPC) that restricts the assignment of women according to battlefield location. Positions are coded "P1" to "P7." "P1" positions (representing the highest combat probability) are closed to women.
  - c. In 1988 US Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci approved a new standard for judging which military jobs should be closed to women, a standard that will apply to all the services. From now on, jobs will be closed to women only when they carry a risk of exposure to direct combat, hostile fire, or capture that is 'equal to or greater' than the risk for similar units in the same theater of operations."

Sources: M. C. Devilbiss, "Job Training Opportunities for Women in the US Armed Forces," in *Women in the Military: Research Perspectives and Policy Directions*, ed. Sharon Hadley and Ronald L. Spector (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Press, 1989), and "New 'Risk Rule' for Women to Apply to All Services," *Maneuver*, *Branches*, *Jobs*, 14 (Spring 1988), 4.

Linked with the combat issue has been the debate over a draft. Legislative authority for the conscription of males expired in 1972. In 1975 President Ford terminated peacetime registration. In 1980 President Carter sought funds to begin to register men again. He also sought an amendment to the Selective Service Act so that women would be required to register. Hearings were held in both the House and Senate on these questions. Like the hearings on the Title 10 provisions, there was much divided Congressional, interest group, and public opinion on the issue of registering women. In 1981 the Supreme Court handed down its decision in *Rostker v. Goldberg*, a suit that had originally been filed in 1971 by draft-eligible males who argued that conscription was unlawful because it violated *their* equal protection rights under the Fifth Amendment since such legislation did not impose a similar obligation for women. On 25 June 1981 the Supreme Court ruled that "Congress had the constitutional authority to exclude women from the military draft." Congress then approved the funds to register men, but not women, and a peacetime registration of young men for the armed forces was reinstated.<sup>81</sup>

In 1979, in testimonies before Congress, the surgeons general of the Army, Navy, and Air Force recommended a draft of doctors. In 1981 a General Accounting Office report "found that a nurse draft was the only practical way to counter wartime shortages." The report also noted that a draft of women was a politically sensitive issue. In 1984 the Health Personnel Mobilization Act, proposing a draft of health care professionals for service in the military, was sent "to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for inclusion in an 'M-day (Mobilization-Day) Emergency Package' [to] become part of a body of legislation that could be put through Congress rapidly in time of 'national emergency.'" As the Nurses Selective Service Bill would have done in World War II, this particular proposal would also have had the effect of mandating registration for women (albeit particular groups of women), since "98 percent of nurses, half the veterinary and pharmacy students, and almost a third of medical students are women." In April 1985 the surgeon general of the Army "asked Congress to consider peacetime registration of doctors and nurses as a solution to 'severe' shortages in the Reserves." But a Department of Defense spokesman later said that DOD did not support this proposal and did not "intend to propose peacetime registration of health professionals."<sup>82</sup> The shortage of military nurses continued in the late 1980s, recruiting was difficult, and at least one service (the Navy) attempted to cope with the shortage by bringing in civilian registered nurses.<sup>83</sup>

All of these issues—types of jobs for women in the military, combat exclusions mandated by law and by policy, and the question of registration and conscription—are ongoing public and military organizational concerns that relate to the long-continuing policy issue, what is to be the role of women in the armed forces?

## Notes

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7. Holm, 7.
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  57. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, Alexandria, Va., "Women Content in Units Force Development Test (MAXWAC)," 1977; and "Women Content in the Army: REFORGER 77 (REFWAC 77)," 1978. Tests were conducted in combat support units in the field under simulated combat conditions. Percentages of women in the units ranged from zero to 35. The presence of women did not adversely affect unit performance.
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## Chapter 2

# Analysis: Major Instruments and Patterns of Change

Factors that have been instrumental in effecting change for women in the military have been both external (change has come through forces outside the military) and internal (change has been a product of intraorganizational forces). For example, the roles of women in the US armed forces have reflected to a great extent the roles of women in society at large (an external factor), but they have also reflected the changing structure of the military organization itself (an internal consideration). One particularly influential internal factor stands out; however, the perception of "military need" (variously defined in differing circumstances) has been the primary driver in the utilization of women in the US armed forces.

Historically, changes in military policy have resulted from internal pressure, an external impetus, or an interaction of external and internal forces. For effecting policy change in the case of women in the military, the latter two routes have been relatively more successful. External factors *by themselves* appear to have been unsuccessful in imposing change on an "unwilling" military (at least in this case), except as they have been facilitators—setting the stage for change rather than being the direct cause of it. The military has rarely bowed to outside pressure *alone* to alter its internal rules and policies. The judicial, legislative, and executive branches of the government have given the military services much latitude and autonomy in making and enforcing their own internal policies.<sup>1</sup>

### External Factors

Examples of external factors that influenced policy change relative to women in the military are cultural norms and assumptions. Over the course of its history as a nation, the United States has witnessed many changes in many assumptions regarding women and in notions of women's place in American society. In the process of social change, many traditional assumptions and ways of thinking have coexisted alongside new ideas.

Every historical period has had a set of guiding assumptions that have served to shape attitudes and definitions within that period's social institutions. When viewing (even recent) history, it is sometimes difficult to understand the pervasive influence of many of these traditional assump-

tions, since they seem so far removed from what is accepted as truth today. Yet it is vitally important to understand the particular historical context and its prevailing notions to pinpoint potential or actual forces of change.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, notions of women mainly as property, as nonpersons (i.e., as possessions of men—typically fathers or husbands—and as having a derivative status through men rather than an independent status of their own), as dutiful daughters, as “helpmates” (wives-companions), and as nurturant mothers helped to shape ideas of appropriate roles for women. These notions were reflected in the values and philosophies of American social institutions, the military included.

In the twentieth century, ideas and legal measures that gave women access to certain rights as citizens (enfranchisement, holding public office, and serving in the armed forces) began to hold sway as views of appropriate roles for women began to be redefined. Ideas of “women as citizens” and “women as persons” began to coexist alongside more traditional roles for women.

In the early history of the United States, because women were neither citizens nor even persons in the eyes of the law—there was controversy over whether the term *people* included women. Questions often arose over the implications of this legal position. Most educational and employment opportunities and virtually all avenues for political participation were typically denied to women by custom, policy, or law.<sup>2</sup> Within this context, then, it is easier to see why the question of women’s status vis-à-vis the military organization was the subject of so much protracted controversy. It was this question plus the issue of defining appropriate jobs for women in the military that preoccupied the armed forces for a century and a half.<sup>3</sup> In light of the fact that these two issues have coexisted historically, it can be suggested that how women have been utilized in and with the military is vitally linked to societal notions regarding women’s status and, moreover, is consistent with prevailing cultural assumptions about what the concept of “femininity” does or does not include. Support for this idea can be seen when “women’s status relative to the military” and “jobs women could perform within the military” are historically juxtaposed. Six important stages in the development of these ideas can then be identified (table 3).<sup>4</sup>

TABLE 3

**Important Historical Developmental Stages in the  
Utilization of Women in the Military**

1. The American Revolution—everyone and all resources are needed to fight this type of war. Even women and other nonpersons (such as slaves, servants, and children) may be used in this emergency situation; women perform a variety of duties, including direct combat roles.

2. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries:—women have no obligation to be in the armed forces since they are not citizens, and since they cannot bear arms, they are virtually useless to a military that has mostly “combat” jobs.

TABLE 3. continued

3. The mid- to late-nineteenth century (includes the Civil War and Spanish American War) - in an emergency, it is permissible for women to serve in civilian capacities *attached to* the armed forces in a variety of roles, especially as nurses (a critically needed skill and a role consistent with--an extension of--the view of women as "nurturant mothers")

4. The early twentieth century (includes World War I)--in an emergency, it is permissible for women to be in the military, but only at lower ranks and only in critically needed areas (especially medical and clerical jobs) where they *already possess the skills and where the labor of men is in short supply*; after the emergency, all women must leave the military except nurses, whose role is institutionalized but with a quasi-military status.

5. The midtwentieth century (includes World War II, Korea, Vietnam) - in an emergency, women can be in the military and perform a wide variety of jobs short of actual combat; after the emergency, women can have a permanent and ongoing role in the armed forces, but they can perform only a very limited number and variety of jobs, all of which must be in peripheral roles (support functions).

6. The late-twentieth century--increasing numbers of women in the military have greatly expanded job opportunities; but they form a special protected subset of military members who are officially exempt from combat jobs by policy and law

Helping to ease the transition from each of these stages to the next were the changing cultural ideas of women's roles and the changing definitions of *femininity* that accompanied these shifts.<sup>5</sup> Each subsequent stage was in keeping with the new notions of appropriate roles and places for women. We can see, for example, how historical ideas of women as nurturant mothers and as wives-companions (assistants to men) helped guide notions of which military roles were appropriate to them at the time (e.g., as nurses, as clerical workers, and in support jobs). In the late-twentieth century, ideas of women as political, physical, intellectual, emotional, and social equals of men began to coexist alongside more traditional notions of women and their roles. It is in viewing the present age with these diverse but coexistent cultural assumptions that the contemporary situation surrounding women in the military (with its competing and often contradictory norms and expectations, values, and definitions of opportunities) becomes much easier to understand.

Cultural assumptions are important in the case of women in the military because they can either provide support for the status quo or be facilitating frameworks for change. Cultural beliefs do not necessarily induce change by themselves; tied in with specific events or circumstances, however, they may be important factors in *influencing* change. A similar argument can be made for the importance of *influencing* rather than *directing* change in the case of outside special interest (lobbying) groups. It has been noted, for instance, that neither expanded societal notions of women's roles per se nor pressure from certain feminist organizations for wider opportunities provided the major impetus for the expanded number and variety of jobs available to women in the military in the early to mid-1970s. Rather, it was the *perception on the part of the military* that the Equal Rights Amendment would be ratified and become law and would then affect military policy in

this area that prompted change. Thus, policy changes at this time were an effort by the military to retain internal control over issues concerning women in the armed forces; and rather than being a response to external pressure, policy change reflected an *interaction* between these external forces and internal military considerations.<sup>6</sup>

A third external influencing factor, legislation, has also had an influencing effect upon the formulation of military policy in this area. In some instances, it has directed change. A good example is Public Law (P.L.) 94-106, which admitted women to the nation's service academies for the first time. Other pieces of legislation (e.g., P.L. 554 in 1942, the WAAC Bill; P.L. 90-130 in 1967, which lifted the 2-percent ceiling on numbers and opened up promotions; and P.L. 95-485 in 1978, which modified the provisions of Title 10, Section 6015, for the Navy) *appear* to have been examples of change imposed on the military by an external source (Congress) but were actually heavily influenced by the armed forces themselves. The services made their viewpoints known regarding provisions to be contained in the legislation. Thus, legislation passed by Congress and incorporated into law may be said to be an important external influencing factor for change in the situation of women and the military at some times; at other times, legislation simply formalizes (codifies into statute) the military's own estimation of its needs in this area.

A fourth factor, judicial decision, is probably the most powerful external precipitator of change because of these questions. Some court rulings on matters related to military policy on women—*Frontiero v. Richardson*, 411 U.S. 677 (1973) on dependency entitlements and *Crawford v. Cushman*, 531 F.2d 114 (2d Cir. 1976) on the issue of pregnancy and fitness for duty—have forced change. Such cases have often involved questions of constitutional rights. On questions pertaining to *utilization*, especially what role women will play in the armed forces, the courts have generally deferred to the military itself.<sup>7</sup>

These external factors—cultural assumptions, outside interest groups, legislation, and judicial decisions—are not the only effecters of change in the status of women in the military. Internal factors also play an important and influential role in the process of policy evolution.

### **Internal Factors**

Like cultural assumptions, which are more powerful forces for change when they are linked with other factors, individual efforts within the ranks to effect change in the status of women in the military have been relatively unsuccessful *except* when they have been tied to more formal channels and mechanisms. The women directors' offices and the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), both internal *advisory* groups, have been successful in effecting changes in policy on military women only when their recommendations and concerns have obtained a

sympathetic hearing with higher-level decision makers (e.g., service chiefs, service secretaries, members of key congressional committees, and the president).

Key individual decision makers, irrespective of the means by which they arrived at their decisions on particular issues, have been crucial internal influences for policy change. Classic examples of this are the quite different decisions, under similar circumstances of need, reached by Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson and Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels regarding the utilization of women vis-à-vis the military in World War I. As the makers of military policy, the service secretaries, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the heads of major military commands and activities will continue to be instrumental in prompting policy change.

Clearly, policy decisions are not random; they must rest on some basis or justification. It is in seeking out this internal basis for policy decisions that crucial influencing factors can be determined. This author believes that the major internal basis for policy decisions on issues of women in the military has been the concept of *military necessity*, an umbrella term that encompasses both "changing military organizational structure" and "military needs."<sup>8</sup>

Some opportunities for women in the military have come about through changes in the structure of the military organization itself. This can be shown by looking at preindustrial times: the United States relied on a strategy of defensive domestic retaliation, wars were fought principally on the participants' lands and waters, and armies and navies were typically small and localized. With the advent of industrialization in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, concepts of military strategy and international relationships changed dramatically. Americans were now forced to think in more macroscopic terms, such as extending the definition of the *home front* to more than a localized boundary. Defense was now a *global* issue. Moreover, industrialization and standardization made it possible to mass-produce the food, clothing, weapons, and equipment necessary to support very large armies in the field for prolonged periods of time. But to do so required the labor of both women and men.<sup>9</sup>

The advent of industrialization also created drastic changes in the military itself as an organization. It became larger, more differentiated, and increasingly complex, as did many other societal institutions at the time. The "new military" thus required new, more, and different kinds of jobs. Whereas the military forces of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were organizations consisting primarily of individuals with combat jobs, the twentieth-century military was overwhelmingly composed of support, service, and noncombat specialties. These were the kinds of jobs considered appropriate for women at the time. Furthermore, women were frequently needed in these jobs because they already possessed the requisite training and skills; and the supply of men to fill these jobs was often severely limited.

Military need has been a major factor in the utilization of women in the military and in the development of policies pertaining to them. In fact,

definitions of military need have often overridden other influential forces and pressures for change. At times, the military's utilization of women has been a bit more restrictive than generally accepted societal notions of appropriate roles for women. At other times, however, the military's utilization of women has seemed somewhat more liberal than generally believed. Some examples will serve here to illustrate this point.

As has been shown, the United States was slow historically to incorporate women into its armed forces. This may in large measure have been due to the masculine ethos of the military and to the general acceptance of the idea that war, like politics, was a *man's* business.<sup>10</sup> Even when women possessed skills that the military could use (e.g., medical, administrative, and clerical skills), organizational limitations were placed on women's utilization if there were no emergencies and if manpower levels were sufficient to get the job done. Illustrative of this is the period immediately following World War II until the late 1960s, when the numbers of women in the military were limited by law and when the military utilized even fewer women than the law allowed (and the types of military jobs available to women were severely restricted by the military's own policies). The fact that women were first permitted to be uniformed military members, that is, allowed to become members of the organization at all, during the twentieth century also serves to illustrate the military's historical policy of restriction and exclusion of women when armies and navies were small and sufficient manpower was available. It is important to point out that the nineteenth-century military was not the only American social institution to limit women's participation. Thus, the military appears, at first glance, to be merely a reflection of the times. However, the converse is also true: it is also important to note that during this time, *when critical skills that women possessed were needed by the military, they were put to use even in the face of resistance.*

For example, in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the military's use of uniformed female nurses was a novel idea and one that met with much opposition. However, women were utilized as nurses during periods of wartime (their early contributions were especially significant in the Civil War and the Spanish-American War) because casualty rates from disease and injury were extremely high; thus their medical skills were greatly *needed*. In World War I, the scarcity of men to perform needed clerical duties opened the door for women who had these skills to serve in and with the armed forces. In World War II, women were used in an increasing number of combat support and combat service support jobs because of a critical need for personnel. In the early to mid-1970s, increasing opportunities for a greater number of women in a wide variety of jobs short of direct combat helped to meet personnel accession needs in an all-volunteer force.

In all of these cases, the needs of the military have framed its policies on the incorporation and utilization of women. *Both* the situation of more restrictive use (the 1950s and 1960s) and the situation of more extensive

use (World War II and the early days of the all-volunteer force) have been legitimated by the concept of military need. *Military need* has then been linked to the notion of *military effectiveness*—the idea that the very interests of national security depend on the effective performance of the military mission, which can only be maximized by either more or fewer women utilized in either expanded roles or in a limited number of jobs. Thus, instead of using “national security interests” to frame and guide its policy proactively in this area, the armed forces have used these concerns as *ex post facto* justifications for internal utilization policies—policies which have been primarily driven by notions of military need.

This is not to say, of course, that some important and influential individual decision makers have not been motivated by a genuine desire to increase, or to limit, opportunities for women in the military.<sup>11</sup> It simply states that such individual desires have taken place within the context of what constituted “military need” at a particular point in time. Subsequently, policies on women in the military have reflected the boundaries of that perceived need. A general conclusion to be drawn from history, then, is that although societal definitions and individual decision makers’ perceptions of jobs that are appropriate for women are important in establishing notions of appropriate military roles for women, they are *less* important than overriding military organizational contingencies.

Table 4 represents the various factors affecting change in the situation of women and the military. An understanding and appreciation of the historical context in which particular events took place helps in assessing the success of each factor. Finally, it should be noted that *combinations of two or more factors* (“interaction effects” such as “informal individual and group efforts” and “court decisions” or “cultural assumptions” and “influential individual decision makers”) have likewise been instrumental in affecting change in this area.<sup>12</sup>

TABLE 4  
Historical Factors Influencing Change  
for Women in the Military

	<i>External Influencing Factors</i>	<i>Internal Influencing Factors</i>
Most Successful	Court Decisions	Military Need
Very Successful	Law and Legislation	Changing Military Organizational Structure
Moderately Successful	Outside Pressure Groups	Influential Individual Decision Makers
Least Successful	Cultural Assumptions and Social Norms*	Informal Individual or Group Efforts “within the Ranks”*

\*These two factors by themselves may be considered as least successful historical strategies for change. However, both have been important *facilitators* for change when linked with other forces (such as law, court decision, influential decision makers).



### Notes

1. Judith Hicks Stiehm, *Arms and the Enlisted Woman* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 108-33.
2. Shelia M. Rothman, *Women's Proper Place* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1978).
3. It can in fact be argued that these two questions are still fundamental sources of controversy.
4. Albie Sachs and Joan Hoff Wilson, *Sexism and the Law* (New York: Free Press, 1978).
5. M. C. Devilbiss, "Women and War: A Conceptual Framework for Historical and Contemporary Roles" (Paper presented at a special session of the American Sociological Association annual meeting, San Antonio, Tex., August 1984).
6. Jeanne Holm, *Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution* (Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1982), 246-59; Stiehm, 102-12.
7. See *Owens v. Brown*, 455 F. Supp. 291 (D.D.C. 1978) which, although ruling that the exclusion of women as a class from sea duty was unconstitutional, nevertheless left the specifics of actually assigning women to these jobs up to the Navy, noting that these were "essentially military decisions"; and *Rostker v. Goldberg*, 101 S. Ct. 2646 (1981), in which the Supreme Court, on the issue of drafting women into the military, showed a "healthy deference" to the other branches of government." Stiehm, 39, 119, 122-23.
8. A similar point is made in Stiehm, 111-13.
9. M. C. Devilbiss, "Women in the Armed Forces" (Paper presented at the Fifth Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., June 1981). For an extensive treatment of this issue, see D'Ann Campbell, *Women at War with America: Private Lives in a Patriotic Era* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984).
10. Stiehm, 224-27.
11. *Ibid.*, 132.
12. *Ibid.*, 113.

## Chapter 3

# Overview of Key Issues: Major Problems Remaining

Major current policy issues concerning women in the military are pragmatic, visible illustrations of unresolved, underlying issues. For a more complete understanding of these concerns, it is necessary to bring not only these visible problems but also their underlying issues and their institutional supports under close examination and analysis. It is only through such a process that constructive suggestions for change can realistically be made.

Setting a policy agenda for issues pertaining to women in the military is a complex task, a task made even more difficult by the presence of several analytically confounding elements that present potential barriers to effective analysis. For example, a highly visible policy concern may often be a reflection or symptom of an underlying—and sometimes hidden—cause. Such a situation may be present in many different areas of military policy, but it is especially the case for policy concerning women.<sup>1</sup>

The key to a thorough analysis of items on the current policy agenda lies in unraveling the elements of those contributory causes that are at the base of the visible issues—somewhat akin to what a physician goes through in attempting to diagnose a problem or disease by looking at a patient's manifest physical symptoms. Policy analysis, however, yet another critical and even more difficult analytical step is required if one wishes to get to the root of the hidden causes themselves: seek out the values and perceptions that form the underlying institutional supports for these contributory factors. This process is especially challenging because such institutional values and perceptions are not likely to be written down. Nevertheless, they form the basis for commonly and often tacitly accepted belief systems and behavioral norms taken as virtually axiomatic because they are so much a part and product of the environment.<sup>2</sup> Especially confounding is the particular case of policy concerning women in the military and the fact that such institutional supports may often have emotional as well as factual elements attached to them; and emotional realities (even if they are in disagreement with factual realities) are less subject to rational analysis and suggestions for change. Table 5 outlines three key levels of policy analysis.

TABLE 5

## Levels of Policy Analysis

Level I* Overt symptoms	Practical problems that need immediate solutions
Level II** Contributory causes	Unresolved continuing issues and concerns
Level III*** Underlying institutional supports	Organizational assumptions and fundamental belief systems; organizational self-concept

- \*Usually seen and recognized  
 \*\*Can be seen or unseen; recognized or unrecognized  
 \*\*\*Usually unseen and unrecognized.

## Ten Key Issue Areas

It is the contention of this author that an effective and thorough analysis of the policy agenda of issues pertaining to women in the military must be approached on all three levels (visible symptoms, contributory causes, and underlying institutional supports). Using the background information provided in the previous chapters, the following discussion will consider 10 major current policy areas affecting women in the military. In each of these areas, overt symptoms (Level I) will be highlighted first. Contributory causes (Level II) will then be addressed. Identifying these contributory causes is of particular importance since using them to pose questions at the conceptual level may often make the common denominator running through several seemingly unrelated issues more clear. The needs assessment can then be used as a springboard for more effective policy resolutions aimed at the real *cause* of an issue, not just at its symptoms. Last, the analysis will explore the connections between these questions and the underlying institutional values and perceptions (Level III). A summary of the 10 current key issue areas to be explored appears in table 6. See also the appendix.

TABLE 6

## Ten Current Key Issue Areas Affecting Women in the US Armed Forces

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational monitors</li> <li>• Family policy</li> <li>• Numbers</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Roles</li> <li>• Combat exclusion</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The draft</li> <li>• Minority women</li> <li>• Special concerns (health care, uniforms, equipment design, performance evaluations)</li> <li>• Images</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

The following discussion presents one attempt at an open assessment of what the values and perceptions underlying these key issue areas may be. It is hoped that this will at least open up a dialogue on some of these

concerns. It is only by recognizing the values and perceptions contained within our guiding, fundamental organizational assumptions that we can begin to see how they may be directing us.

## Organizational Monitors

The organizational history of groups that concern issues affecting women in the military appears to imply an institutional assumption that these issues are best addressed by advisory bodies rather than those who make policy decisions. Put another way, this institutional assumption says that direct knowledge is not essential to decision-making authority in this area; nor does direct knowledge carry with it the organizational authority to make decisions. Furthermore, the phaseout of the women directors' offices and the placing of their function in boards, committees, and task forces has eliminated the institutional memory base. This has led to reinventing the wheel on many of these issues and to the implication that no uniformed authority need have the full-time job of directly monitoring and having knowledge of these issues.

The foregoing seems to imply an organizational assumption that issues pertaining to women in the military are not perceived as of central interest. Otherwise, there would be a uniformed, knowledge-based authority to monitor these concerns, make decisions concerning them, and be an advocate for them vis-à-vis other institutional interests.<sup>3</sup>

But what about the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), the Department of Defense's own organizational element that deals with "women's issues"? When we look closely at the actual structure and authority of DACOWITS, we can detect some underlying organizational assumptions. In chapter 1, we noted that the DACOWITS is the only continuing organizational monitor for issues and concerns affecting women in the military. However, the DACOWITS was established in 1951 as an advisory body and as an unpaid volunteer *civilian* group (with a military staff consisting of a small group of administrative personnel to do its record keeping). These original characteristics of the committee have not changed. The continuing organizational facts about this group can be identified as follows: (1) it is not a policy-making body; (2) it is civilian, not military, and therefore (3) it has little *direct* power to effect change in the situation of women in the military. (This is not to say that the DACOWITS has not been instrumental in negotiating for change in certain policies affecting military women; it often has been very influential. The point is that it is the mission of the DACOWITS to *advise* military decision makers on issues of concern to military women, not to make policy in this area.)

Another important point must be emphasized concerning the issue of underlying organizational assumptions regarding issues affecting women in the military. This is the continuing historical reality that "it is primarily

men—the commander-in-chief, the members of Congress, the civilian military secretaries, and military commanders—who make military policy. It is they who determine what [military] men and women may and must do.”<sup>4</sup> Thus we find that it is principally men who make policy decisions about military women and, moreover, that these men make decisions about women in the military *as a group*.<sup>5</sup> But this organizational preference for making decisions for women in the armed forces as an undifferentiated category of people ignores the fact that “women in the military” are an increasingly differentiated group (they are not all single “career women” anymore); and moreover, their experiences—and thus the important questions and concerns facing them—will vary, depending on the branch of armed forces in which they serve.<sup>6</sup> All of these points serve to underscore the urgent need for more institutionally powerful organizational monitors of issues especially affecting women in the military.

Given this overall context then, it is not hard to see why, under the present circumstances, the military (and especially military decision makers) may perceive individuals and interest groups who monitor issues of concern to military women as potential adversaries. This may be in part because it is often these groups who have access to the knowledge, background, and history on many of these concerns, and because they seek answers from the military on whether and how a particular concern is being addressed (they look for “organizational accountability”). This puts the military in a defensive position: It must respond; and it must often justify its work in an area or its lack of attention to it. To further compound the situation, questions about the utilization and treatment of women in the military are often potential news media items, which means public monitoring and censure are possible; the organization therefore faces *the potential loss of internal control* over such policy decisions.

The issue of an organizational monitor for the concerns of women in the military is not an easy one to solve. In this, as in other military matters, there is a need for institutional loyalty and a certain amount of institutional control; but there is also a need to listen to outside monitors who will call the organization and its assumptions to task when the need arises. The present “solution of choice” (monitoring by the DACOWITS and by various task forces) is ineffective because it divorces the knowledge base on these issues from the direct authority to effect change in them; thus the “advising” and the “deciding” on issues of importance to military women continue to be separate responsibilities.

The organizational monitor issue is, of course, exacerbated by the speed of social change. Once almost entirely segregated from the military mainstream, women were relatively rapidly “integrated” into the organizational structure during the early 1970s. However, this organizational incorporation was done at the same time a knowledge base and an awareness of their particular concerns was *not* being incorporated into the military mainstream. Until this knowledge base and awareness *becomes fully incorporated* into the organization (i.e., becomes a part of common

knowledge so that a separate monitoring body is no longer necessary), it is essential to have some institutionalized structure or mechanism *with decision-making authority* to act as a knowledgeable overseer for these concerns. To address this need, each of the services should establish a *uniformed* organizational component that would be tasked with performing the following functions:

- collect, store, maintain, and protect information on issues pertaining to women in the military.
- serve as an institutional "advocate" to monitor these issues and to assess the need for change.
- provide a coordinating service for the military and outside individuals or groups who also are concerned with issues in this area.
- facilitate coordination, approval, *and enactment* of the best possible decisions in these matters.

If an organizational element such as this (i.e., fully incorporated and legitimated within the institution) is not established by the military, then issues particularly affecting women in the armed forces will continue to be monitored by other than military authorities. But even if such a structure is formally established within the military itself, this does not—nor should it—preclude an interest and involvement in these issues by outside individuals and groups. Input from both internal and external sources will continue to be important factors in constructing a more objective and realistic perspective on these issues.<sup>7</sup>

## **Family Policy**

A look at the organizational response to family policy issues indicates a historical tendency by the military to discount the need for policy change in this area until these concerns are brought to its attention by outside interest groups, legislative enactment, or judicial review. In fact, even since 1980, the military has examined family policy issues only reluctantly and is just now beginning to define the issues as of central organizational concern. A key factor in the approach to such issues appears to be the presence or absence of a military necessity to look at them. Here, "military necessity" connotes two things: (1) it is militarily necessary to look at an issue when a significant and powerful outside influence defines it as an issue of concern, and (2) it is militarily necessary to look at these issues when they begin to affect other important elements of the organization itself. The institutional assumption here appears to be that issues impacting upon military women become more central when they affect military men; they are then defined as "organizational concerns" rather than "women's issues."<sup>8</sup> This is especially the case for family policy questions where some additional institutional assumptions are also at work.

Issues of marriage, pregnancy, and parenthood are particularly illustrative of these organizational assumptions. With marriage (especially the joint-spouse issue), the organizational concern is not that military women are marrying military men—it's that military women are marrying military men and then wanting to stay in the military themselves.<sup>9</sup> The pregnancy issue is an extremely emotional one; and again, the organizational concern is not that military women are getting pregnant but that they are doing so while maintaining military careers. Likewise, the notion of military members becoming parents is not in itself negatively sanctioned (in fact, it may even be a positively sanctioned behavior); but once a child is born, the institutional assumption is that of the *mother* as the primary caretaker. It is a challenge to the organization if the mother wishes to continue to pursue her career within it. This seems to imply that the organizational assumptions at work here are those that can be labeled "traditional views" of family roles: male as primary breadwinner, female as primary homemaker and child caretaker.<sup>10</sup> In fact, the underlying organizational assumption may be that "motherhood"—but not "fatherhood"—is incompatible with *effective* military service or even (as policies of the recent past regarding pregnancy and even current prohibition over enlisting single parents show us) with military service at all.<sup>11</sup> The reality of a married woman with a full-time career and the image of a pregnant woman in uniform run counter to deeply held institutional beliefs. Protestations that pregnancy and parenthood (especially motherhood) *may* adversely affect mobility, readiness, or job performance,<sup>12</sup> and that joint-spouse assignment requests are increasingly difficult for the organization to cope with, may reflect real problems indeed; but such protestations represent not so much reasons for resistance to change as closely embraced institutional values and perceptions.

To begin to try to address this situation on a rational level, it is probably best to start with the reality that men's and women's family and work role expectations are becoming increasingly similar; that is, many women, like men, do marry and have children and also have careers. This situation reflects a set of changing perceptions of family and work roles within the society as a whole; and military women (especially those of a younger generation) are likely to come to the military with these "contemporary" (as opposed to "traditional") ideas and expectations. Marriage combined with a career, and also other "family planning" options such as birth control, abortion, and elective single parenthood, may be seen as realistic individual choices for them.<sup>13</sup> Such choices, however, fly in the face of the more "traditional" organizational assumptions concerning military careers and motherhood.

Given this reality, the services are faced with a choice. Their policy decisions can forbid marriage, pregnancy, and parenthood (any or all of these) for military women, and force—as they have in the past—a loss of women who make this choice. Alternatively, the services can accept the processes of marriage, pregnancy, and parenthood (any or all of these) for military women, as they do now, and adapt organizational policies to

address them.<sup>14</sup> One way this could be approached would be to determine the rates for marriage, pregnancy, and family size for populations of comparable civilian women and use this data as a basis for planning purposes in the armed forces. Cohort analysis and life-cycle variables in the study of family policy concerns for military women could also prove very useful.<sup>15</sup>

The institutional assumptions of few or no women with career interests and of women as junior partners (or even as "property") in marital relationships must be altered to reflect the times. Also, the organizational assumptions that military responsibilities will *always* take precedence over family obligations,<sup>16</sup> and that the volunteer labor of military spouses will *always* be available<sup>17</sup> need to be reexamined in light of changing individual expectations and organizational realities. The challenge is to evolve family policies that realistically reflect a set of changing factual conditions and not to cling to a set of organizational assumptions that no longer fit the realities of the situation. If the services are slow to examine their policies, and particularly their institutional assumptions in this area, changes in family policies will continue to be imposed upon them from the outside.

### **Numbers, Training, and Roles**

These three areas will be considered together not only because they pose interrelated policy questions, but also because there appear to be several common organizational assumptions that pervade them. Turning first to the "numbers" (accession) question,<sup>18</sup> we see that numbers (and percentages) of women in the military, although increasing since 1973, still remain small relative to the numbers and percentages of *men* in the military.<sup>19</sup> Since the larger society from which the pool of military eligibles is drawn reflects a "balanced" gender ratio (approximately a 50/50 distribution), we need to question why military organizations have highly skewed gender ratios, and why such ratios persist. We are better able to "get at" the underlying organizational assumptions in this area when we pose the question this way: "why don't women make up fifty percent of the military when they are fifty percent of the population?" (Why are there "so few" women in the military?)

The reasons that numbers of women in the military are low (and are kept low) may be based on the following organizational assumptions: that women are of limited utilizability (i.e., they are able to perform only certain types of jobs), and that women are a liability to the military or, perhaps more accurately, more of a liability than an asset to the military (their "costs" may outweigh their "benefits" in important ways).<sup>20</sup> There is some element of objective reality to the first assumption (women are indeed barred from certain types of military jobs), but we must look into this situation further to ask *why* this is the case. When we do so, we find that women are considered to be of limited utilizability because they are thought to be



*incapable as a group* of performing certain types of jobs (specifically, "combat" jobs—the central and most important military roles). These jobs are therefore *naturally* considered "inappropriate" and "off-limits" to women. (Put another way, the "naturalness" argument here is that the "very nature" of such jobs is incompatible with the "very nature" of women.)<sup>21</sup> Thus, all women's participation in the military is limited because of women's perceived "inherent" *group* characteristic. Relatedly, military women are judged by the organization to be a liability not only because they have limited use but also because they are believed to be less available (and therefore contribute to attrition and to lessened organizational preparedness),<sup>22</sup> and they cannot be "substituted" in all cases for military men.<sup>23</sup> Military women can therefore be described as "better qualified" than military men (because they are typically subject to higher enlistment standards) but not as "useful" or "valuable" to the organization because of "structural constraints"—the limitations that the military itself places upon women's participation. Yet these same structural constraints are the very result of the limitations that the military's own organizational assumptions impose! Thus we see here what can only be described as the "policy/ideology tautology": the military cannot utilize more women (its policy outcomes) because the military cannot utilize more women (its ideological belief).

We need also to give brief attention to the second aspect of the gender roles question here. Having identified some possible organizational assumptions as to why military organizations established highly skewed gender roles in the first place, we must now ask: why do such skewed ratios *persist*? This is the low-visibility issue and its related component, the low-power question. If women exist in low numbers in the military because they are perceived to be less utilizable and an organizational liability, then the *continuance* of their low relative numbers (and their low relative power in the organization) can serve to perpetuate the idea that women are unimportant or unnecessary to the organization and that the organization is not dependent on them. (We will be examining these organizational assumptions in greater detail in the "images of military women" key issue area. For now, we simply need to note their relationship to the "numbers" and "leadership roles" questions.)

We discover a similar set of organizational assumptions emerging when we examine the question of "training" for women in the military. We see that the training military women receive is guided by the assumption that women "can" perform *only certain types* of military roles. Let us examine more closely the word *can* in this context. It may be taken to mean that women "have the ability to" perform only certain types of military jobs, or that women are "allowed to" perform only certain types of military jobs. The first meaning of the word *can* may be thought of as the "inherent performance inability" cause. If this belief is true, then the second meaning of the word *can* is the resulting organizational *effect*: if women are incapable of performing certain types of jobs, then it follows that they should be assigned to only those jobs they can perform. The problem with this

reasoning is, of course, twofold: (1) is the first assumption (the inherent performance inability assumption) true? and (2) how can we know whether it is true or false in the absence of giving women the opportunity to perform (and to succeed or to fail) in certain jobs? To make this point more clearly, we can contrast the situation for military women with: the military's "opposite" organizational assumptions for men: (1) men can be trained for *all* military roles (because they have the potential ability to perform them), and (2) there are no military roles that men cannot fill (because there are no structural constraints—organizational limitations—on men as a group).<sup>24</sup>

Another important aspect of the question of training for women in the armed forces is the "gendered" nature of military occupational specialties. This manifests itself organizationally as the belief (and the policy) that there are "men only" military jobs, that there are "interchangeable" (that is, appropriate for both men and women) military jobs, and that there are no "women only" military jobs. The underlying organizational assumptions upon which this "sexual division of labor" in the armed forces<sup>25</sup> rests are the inherent performance inability of women (with the related "organizational fear" that if women—who are, by definition, incapable—are put into jobs they cannot perform, then the organization itself will suffer), and that warfare is manly<sup>26</sup> and therefore the military is a *male* institution.

We see the "inherent performance inability of the group" assumption applying to other aspects of training (and job performance) situations as well. For example, there is the organizational perception that when women perform deficiently, it is because they are women and not for other reasons.<sup>27</sup> (The comparable organizational assumption for men is that men's deficient performance is due to some *individual* shortcoming, not due to a *categorical* "shortcoming"; i.e., gender.)

Issues of training for military women relate to two other key areas: (1) basic military instruction,<sup>28</sup> and (2) the notion of "traditional" versus "nontraditional" military occupations for women. We noted previously that basic military training was initially gender segregated, became gender integrated, and then was reseggregated once more. At first glance, this may seem to be due to the "inherent performance inability" assumption; that is, that women cannot be trained in basic military (combat) skills because they are *unable to learn* these skills. There is, however, a more compelling reason for the organizational assumption driving women's exclusion here. The assumption behind gender-segregated basic training is that the basic skills necessary to become a soldier or sailor are qualitatively different (separate and unequal) for men and women and that once men and women have qualified to be a part of the military, there are certain basic skills which must be common knowledge for all military men, but not for any military women. Here we can see the "training" and "military roles" connection quite clearly: (1) all men need to have certain fundamental military skills (the skills of a combat warrior) even though most men in the military will not be placed in "combat" jobs, and (2) such skills and knowledge are completely

unnecessary for military women because (in theory at least) the organization prohibits their assignment to such jobs. One result is that the foundational knowledge base of the organization is shared by all of its men and none of its women.<sup>29</sup>

"Training" questions also relate to the "traditionality" of military jobs. The terms *traditional* and *nontraditional* are meaningful only when referring to jobs for military women, not to jobs for military men because men "traditionally" have performed all types of military jobs whereas (it is believed) women have not.<sup>30</sup> The problem here arises when we look at the "tradition" and see that, in fact, women throughout US history have performed all types of military roles, including hand-to-hand combat.<sup>31</sup> It must be, then, that what are considered to be "traditional" or "nontraditional" jobs for military women relate not to past history but to "living memory." Jobs are "traditional" (and therefore, by extension, "appropriate" for women) when it is not uncommon to see women performing such roles in the organization. When women are *not* assigned to particular occupations (or when they are present in such jobs only in extremely low numbers), then the military considers such jobs as atypical (that is, as "nontraditional") for women.<sup>32</sup> It is especially important to note that in such "nontraditional" military jobs, the competence—and even the mere presence—of women in such jobs is constantly subject to test, on both individual and group bases. Women in "nontraditional" military jobs often express the notion that they must "prove" themselves in every new job situation.<sup>33</sup> Indeed they must prove themselves for two reasons: (1) to demonstrate that *they* (as individuals) are competent in their jobs, and (2) to show that "women" can perform such duties. The latter reason is especially related to the organizational assumption that women are uncommon in (or absent from) such jobs because they are incapable of performing them.

Thus we see that the assumptions about the numbers of women in the armed forces and about the kind of military training women will receive ultimately relate to assumptions about the roles they will perform in military organizations. This can be stated in the form of the question, "how can and should women serve?"<sup>34</sup> (Note that this is not the same question as that posed for military men, since the assumption is that men can and should serve in all ways—the question is, how can they serve *best*?) Stating the "women's utilization" question<sup>35</sup> in such a way reveals the organizational assumption that women have "a place" in the military and it is important to define exactly what that place is. Through subjecting such a line of reasoning to close scrutiny, we can arrive at an important insight: there are only two major self-limiting systems of stratification (statuses that make a difference) within the military—the officer/enlisted distinction and the male/female distinction. These two "either/or" categories are the two most important defining criteria of membership in the US armed forces. Membership in these categories (the former an achieved status, the latter an ascribed one) determines the individual's "place" within the military organization.

Examining these two "either/or" categories further, we discover where the issues of women's "low visibility" and "low power" come together. Low power is in one sense a product of low visibility; but it also results from a lack of women in military leadership and decision-making roles. One reason for the absence of women in key military positions is that promotions are often tied to experience in combat roles and women cannot be assigned to combat roles. But there is another organizational dynamic at work here: what the military envisions a "military leader" ought to be.

Leaders of an organization personify that organization's values. If women are seen as marginal<sup>36</sup> within the organization, then most certainly it would not be appropriate to have them as *leaders* of such organizations. But let us pursue an analysis of these "organizational self-concepts" a bit further. Another reason why military organizations may not want women in leadership roles is that women in such roles may "act" in leadership "ways" that are fundamentally different from the way men act in leadership roles. This is the issue of leadership "style." Although this is still very much an open question (as it is in the corporate world),<sup>37</sup> it has indeed been suggested that the "power-down" leadership model within the military can be an effective one for women. However, this model is an *emerging* one for women and it is still seen as somewhat incompatible for women to fill the "traditional" role of military leadership.<sup>38</sup> But if some women use the "power-down" style, it may cause them to be seen as "weak" or "ineffectual" leaders. Here then we see that the question of "women in military leadership roles" is more than a question of individual capacity (or lack of capacity) for such roles—it is a matter of the underlying organizational assumptions of what a "military leader" looks like and does. Unless and until a perceptible shift occurs in these assumptions (and we see the beginnings of such a shift as high-ranking *male* military leaders effectively employ "nontraditional" leadership styles),<sup>39</sup> women in military leadership roles will continue to be limited not only because of organizational assumptions and views about women, but also because of the underlying organizational view of itself (the "organizational self-concept").

As we have seen, the role of women in the US armed forces has been an evolutionary one. Historically, women were judged not to be an appropriate part of the military (they served a military function, but did so as civilians, not as military members). They have been viewed as emergency or "part time" help in the military, as serving in peripheral rather than in core roles in the armed forces, and as a resource of last resort. However, at the present time, these organizational assumptions may be evolving toward the assumptions that women are a legitimate part of military organizations, and that women are an important and continuing *resource in their own right*. Organizational assumptions about women's military roles will continue to evolve as women become increasingly "substitutable" for (interchangeable with) men in military roles<sup>40</sup> and as the organizational character of the military itself changes.<sup>41</sup>

## Combat Exclusion

When we examined the "numbers, training, and roles" questions in the previous section, we saw that women form a "less utilizable" subcategory of US military personnel principally because of the class restrictions that the services place upon them.<sup>42</sup> In this section, we will see that "the most important limit on the military's ability to 'use' women derives from those laws which prohibit their (even voluntary) participation in combat."<sup>43</sup>

Some of the debate in this arena is directly over the question of inclusion or exclusion of women in combat roles. Yet on another level, it can be seen that the argument is really over whether women are to be included or excluded in the military's most central roles—those institutionally defined as the "most valuable." Thus, the question of "women in combat roles" is also a question about organizational status and organizational power; specifically, how much of each shall women in the military have?

The subject of "women in combat roles" is an emotional one and thus not often subjected to empirical evidence. However, when the attempt is made to rationally sort out the "pros and cons" of the debate, we can discover five major arguments on each side (table 7).

TABLE 7

### Arguments For and Against Women in Combat Roles

#### *Con*

1. The occupational specialization argument: combat is a man's job.
2. The environment/danger argument: a combat environment is unsuitable for women; they should be protected from it.
3. The combat effectiveness argument: the presence of women in a unit would destroy that unit's effectiveness and thus its ability to accomplish its combat mission.
4. The physical strength argument: women are physically weaker than men and thus are unable to perform combat jobs.
5. The national security interests/figurehead force argument: the presence of more women in the military, and specifically in combat roles, will lead other nations to perceive United States forces as weak.<sup>44</sup>

#### *Pro*

1. The historical argument: women have served in combat roles efficiently and effectively.
2. The sex discrimination argument: the blanket restriction of women as a class from a category of jobs is unjustly discriminatory since some women are just as capable and interested in performing combat jobs as men are.
3. The opportunity argument: women should have the right of equal access to all types of jobs, combat roles included.
4. The citizenship argument: equality of citizenship rights implies equality of sacrifice (a potentiality of combat roles) as well as equality of opportunity.
5. The military necessity argument: because of population profiles, the number of young men eligible for military service in the 1980s declined and the military had to rely increasingly upon women, bringing forth the question of women in combat roles.

With the possible exception of the historical fact argument ("pro" #1), the points in table 7 represent assumptions about women and their roles in

military organizations. Because (in theory at least) current law and military policy prohibit the assignment of women to combat roles, we must look to the "con" side of the debate in order to help bring the underlying organizational assumptions about this issue to the surface.

There are, however, two curious elements in all of this debate that need to be especially recognized. One is that many of the organizational assumptions cited above appear to persist in spite of facts (sometimes the military's own facts) to the contrary.<sup>45</sup> When this happens, these assumptions take on the character of "myth"—that is, they become guiding assumptions that are based on the primacy of belief over evidence.<sup>46</sup> (Senator William Proxmire used the term *myth* to describe three of the above assumptions—women should be barred from combat, female soldiers can be protected, and the combat exclusion policy enhances national security.)<sup>47</sup>

A second curious element of this debate is that, in spite of the legal and policy restriction on their assignments, women in the US military are in fact assigned to positions considered to be "combat" roles.<sup>48</sup> (This situation is made possible, of course, by the military's own definitions: what does or does not constitute a "combat" role in the US armed forces is frequently subject to change.) Thus the question as to whether military women "should be" assigned to combat roles is often a moot point because they are already there doing jobs that "look like" combat roles and in many cases are even defined as such. What is very interesting here is the question of why, given this reality, the military chooses to perpetuate the assumptions that women cannot perform combat roles and are not in fact assigned to "combat" jobs. Perhaps the answer to this can be found in the "organizational self-concept" referred to in the previous section. By denying that women can perform combat duties and are in fact in such roles, the military can maintain its image as a male institution.

The combat exclusion is a difficult problem for military women since all women in the armed forces are affected by it, and the career development opportunities of many women are directly limited by it. Furthermore, the combat exclusion of women in the military affects men as well, since men must then (in theory at least) fill all combat jobs. Thus, the "risks" of military duty are unequal for men and women.<sup>49</sup> However, the organizational assumptions surrounding the idea of women in combat roles support all of these outcomes since it is believed (1) that women (as a class) are a less utilizable resource, (2) that any individual woman's<sup>50</sup> career development is secondary to the overall goal of an effective military organization, (3) that combat is a man's job, and (4) that when serving their country, military women should be protected (by military men) from the dangers that are a realistic part of military service.<sup>51</sup>

One reason the "women in combat roles" debate is a continuing one is that notions concerning the role of women in military organizations are changing. During World War II, for example, it was assumed that all women in the military were noncombatants; this assumption may no longer universally apply.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, the assumption that military women should

not be exposed to the occupational risks of military service (the "protection" assumption) may not fit the expectations of the current generation of young people, men and women alike.<sup>53</sup> Finally, it is important to emphasize that, while the issue of women in combat roles is one that is meeting with changing organizational assumptions,<sup>54</sup> it is also one that will be influenced by debate in the public arena because it is not solely an *internal* issue: it is a matter of *public* policy and law.

## The Draft

The issue of women and conscription shares some points in common with the issue of women in combat roles. One such similarity is that both of these questions are public policy issues, not simply internal military matters. A second commonality is that these issues, once historically distinct, are now becoming closely tied to one another—in part because societal norms and expectations concerning men's and women's roles are changing.

Unlike several other nations (e.g., Israel, the Soviet Union, Great Britain) women in the United States have never been subject to conscription in the armed forces. (Indeed, this in itself is curious, since public opinion surveys—since 1940—have largely supported the idea of drafting women, and legislation has been introduced into Congress on more than one occasion to do so.)<sup>55</sup> In order to tease out the underlying assumptions here—indeed to better understand these and other key aspects of the issue of "women and the draft" in general—we need to keep in mind the historical background of this subject. In doing so, we need to focus particularly upon the changing assumptions surrounding not only women's roles, but also on the changing assumptions surrounding the military organization and the draft itself.

Since the eighteenth century, it has been considered fundamental to the idea of conscription that service in *the armed forces* is an obligation of citizenship. This is the concept of the "citizen-soldier."<sup>56</sup> In the early days of the American Republic, the term *citizen* included only a small number of people; much more numerous were *noncitizens*, a category that included all slaves, servants, women, American Indians, aliens from other nations, and other marginal and excluded populations. Since women could not be citizens, it thus followed that they could not be soldiers—except of course in the American Revolution, when everyone was needed to fight and even "marginal people" could be used, albeit as resources of last resort.<sup>57</sup> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when the concept of "citizenship" became less exclusive and women were gradually entitled by law to be citizens, women came to be seen as having the right—but *not the responsibility*—to serve in the armed forces.<sup>58</sup> Participation in the military was thus deemed voluntary for women, rather than either voluntary or coerced, as was the case for men. (In part this may be due to the fact that

the armed forces were able to get many women to do necessary national defense work at this time by using them in *civilian capacities* rather than in military roles, even though the actual jobs that some civilian and military women performed entailed virtually identical duties and skills.)<sup>59</sup>

Since the 1970s, however, with the advent of an all-volunteer military force and also the rise of the contemporary women's movement, many questions and assumptions underlying the issue of women and the draft have been challenged. One of these questions is the draft's gender exclusivity: Why are men subject to the draft while women are not? Since the Supreme Court in 1981 upheld the constitutionality of registration for men only, it would not seem too far off the mark to suggest that the underlying assumption is that even though women are citizens, they form a special protected subclass of citizens (similar to children, the aged, and physically handicapped males, for example) who are not subject to the obligations of citizenship that other citizens ("able-bodied" young men) are. It would also seem (given the nature of the arguments cited during Congressional deliberations over this issue) that it is only now—in the late-twentieth century—that the idea of national conscription for women implies their utilization in combat roles.<sup>60</sup> This situation thus brings together not only the idea of equal citizenship obligations for men and women, but also the idea that such equal citizenship responsibilities may imply the participation of men and women in the armed forces on an equal basis.

We can easily see now why the issue of women in the draft is such a thorny one. Subjecting men and women to potentially equal treatment in a national draft and in a military organization would require that the following assumptions be discarded: (1) women do not have the *responsibility* for military service, as men do; (2) women in the military are, at best, of limited organizational utilizability and, at worst, a resource of last resort; (3) women are incapable of performing combat roles; and (4) all women (but especially military women) should be protected (by military men) from the dangers of combat. Occurring at the same time, however, are challenges to other important underlying assumptions. These are the keys to the "public policy" aspects of this debate.

Raising the possibility that women could be subject to the same conditions of military service that apply to men gives rise to close scrutiny of the present assumption that national defense needs are fundamentally different for women and men.<sup>61</sup> Such questioning brings into clearer focus the basis for the assumption currently in place. This is the "separate spheres" concept, which argues that men and women "serve" their country in fundamentally different ways: he at "the front" in battle—she safe away from battle, as a symbol of home and (possibly) as a part of the civilian defense effort. But the press for women's equality (and for first-class citizenship) in the contemporary United States severely challenges the efficacy of these assumptions.

Curiously however, just as the press for women's equality has challenged the idea that conditions of citizenship and national defense are "separate



and unequal" for men and women, it has also called into question the meaning of national service itself. Contemporary feminist thought has placed the concept of the "citizen-soldier" (being one implies being the other) under the analytic microscope. Questions surrounding the issue of "women and the draft" relate to more than that subject alone: they are a debate over the question of whether service *in the armed forces* is an obligation of citizenship for either women or men. Thus we see the changing nature of the concept of "service" itself. Such a notion currently appears to be evolving from an emphasis exclusively upon "military" service to the more broadly *inclusive* idea of "national" service, which would also include, for example, the participation of young men and women in programs designed to address specific "other-than-military" community and national needs (e.g., delivering meals, tutoring, fire fighting, or other public service).<sup>62</sup>

Interestingly, it is precisely here that the military's shortage of health care professionals can be placed in context most clearly. This organizational need for physicians, nurses, and other medical specialists can be seen as a reflection of the overall societal need for people with such skills. Importantly, military health care needs (as the armed forces themselves have long known) can often be taken care of by *either* military or civilian personnel. Thus the concept of "national" service illustrates the possibility of addressing such important military needs through a young *civilian* labor pool rather than forcing the military to rely on its "own" resources for all of its health care needs.<sup>63</sup>

One final point is worthy of note here. Since the military draft ended in 1973, an entire generation of Americans has grown up with the notion of military service as a voluntary rather than an obligatory experience. Such a situation has made the expectations surrounding military service more similar than different for young women and men. The young man's responsibility of having to *register* for a potential military draft may cause some young women and men to consider the contingency of possible military duty somewhat differently,<sup>64</sup> but the important overall point here is still the same: military service is no longer a universal life expectation and a common<sup>65</sup> life experience for young men and an atypical life experience for young women. Both women *and* men serve in the contemporary US armed forces by choice; and this commonality of choice may serve as a uniting force to foster cohesion—rather than alienation—between male and female military personnel. Whereas men's eligibility for the draft served to separate military men and women, an all-volunteer force serves to make men's and women's expectations of military "responsibilities" more similar.

Just where does this leave the question of "women and the draft"? Posing this question calls attention not only to its own underlying assumptions but to some underlying assumptions in other arenas as well. Clearly, the question of "women and the draft" is providing much of the catalyst for a national reassessment of these issues: men's and women's roles in the military and in other contexts, men's and women's citizenship respon-

sibilities, the question of what constitutes "national service," and whether national service is specifically a *military* concern.

### Minority Women

Perhaps the most striking aspect of this area is its being cited here as a key issue. Indeed, if we are "surprised" to see it identified as important, then we are alerted at the very outset to the possibility of the following organizational assumption: that the issue of minority women in the military is seen as affecting so small a number of so small a "component" of the armed forces that it is hardly worth considering as an "issue" at all. Indeed, distinctions between women are frequently not made in research on military populations, the term *blacks* in military surveys typically refers to black males, and any woman in the military who is both nonwhite and nonblack is virtually ignored. These facts tell us much more than the usual statistical caveat, "some groups were too small to make any meaningful interpretations possible."<sup>66</sup> Much-needed input from minority women in the military is apparently being virtually ignored.

The problems facing women in a predominately male institution may be additionally compounded by racial and ethnic group factors. Minority women in the military are not only in a predominately male institution, they are in a predominately *white* male institution. Such an institution, as we have seen, often refuses to acknowledge the needs and concerns of military *women* as an overall group, much less a subcategory within that group. Such organizational neglect is especially disheartening since the needs and concerns of military minority women may in some cases be very different from both white military women and nonwhite military men.<sup>67</sup>

But there is more than just the "needs and concerns" element here. It is also important to ask why there are relatively few minority women in the military in the first place (this relates to questions of accession standards) and why there are so few minority women in military leadership positions (this relates to career advancement issues). On the surface, the answer (justification?) may be that few minority women are interested in military careers and they form such a small pool of those eligible for promotional opportunities that it is easy to see why they do not hold a larger number of leadership positions. But we need to subject that answer to close examination—other factors may be at work here. Specifically, assumptions such as "ignore them because their numbers are small," "they are of such low visibility in the organization that they can be treated as if they do not exist," "minority women are not interested in/qualified for military careers," or "minority women would not make good military leaders" may exist; if so they certainly need to be closely scrutinized.

Perhaps ironically, since current law and policy forbid discrimination in the armed forces based on race (but permit it based on gender), the way to bring the issue of military minority women to the forefront may be to identify

it as a racial/ethnic issue rather than a gender-related one. Such an issue touches both areas, however. Whatever the case, though, simply identifying the issue as important would help to give it (and its implications) some needed visibility. This is not a simple task, however, for the issue impels us to ask some very hard questions like whether there are racist and/or sexist attitudes, assumptions, policies, or practices in the military.<sup>68</sup> If so, we must then ask whether such attitudes and practices are acceptable. If these policies and practices do exist but are not acceptable, what must be done? Posing and analyzing such questions are crucial to providing the organizational attention and commitment these issues need and deserve.

### Special Concerns

An alternative title for this section could be "issues that differentially impact upon military women." Framing such issues in this way is useful because we can uncover two possible organizational assumptions at the outset: (1) women are "nonstandard" military personnel, and (2) issues differentially impacting upon military women are "women's problems," not central or mainstream "organizational concerns."

The issues of women's unique health care needs and uniforms for women illustrate these assumptions quite well. If, for example, the armed forces were a *predominately female institution*, then the health care concerns of women would be seen as standard and recurring issues and organizational services would be put in place to deal with them on an expected and regular basis; and the standard uniform would be designed for women (uniforms for men would be an extra burden and a "deviation").

But in reality the assumption is that the military is a *male institution* and so the "problem" becomes that of (sometimes literally) shaping women to it.<sup>69</sup> Actually, however, the "problem" may lie in the basic assumption itself, which is at odds with the reality of the situation: *there are in fact women in the military and there will continue to be women in the military!* Thus the real issue here may be getting the military to recognize and accept—and modify its organizational structure and services to reflect—the actual reality rather than assumptions about it.

Many of the issues of special concern to military women (e.g., lack of health care services, uniforms that do not fit well, and equipment not designed for them—situations which have a negative impact upon their morale and their safety)<sup>70</sup> also challenge another possible organizational assumption: that "personnel" issues are less important than "hardware" issues. When compulsory military service (for men) was the rule (and not having enough military personnel was usually not a problem), the assumption of "the primacy of things over people" may have been a workable one since personnel (men) were relatively available and replaceable. In an all-volunteer force, however, the continued viability of this assumption is severely suspect. Personnel are neither available in unlimited supply nor

as greatly interchangeable as they once were. This may be due in large measure to the rapidly changing nature of the military toward more sophisticated technology and the increasingly technical expertise and specialization required to operate and maintain high-tech systems.

The assumption of "the primacy of things over people" is an excellent example of assumptions that no longer seem to fit reality. In US military forces of the late twentieth century, we are gradually beginning to see a shift in the hardware versus people assumptions, albeit more toward a "people are important, too" rather than a "people are more important" idea.<sup>71</sup> In helping to focus the attention of the armed forces on their concerns, women have helped to make personnel concerns *in general* a more front-burner issue for military organizations. Thus, it can be argued that such organizational reprioritization of personnel issues has benefited military men as well. But the question is, then, have military women won the battle but lost the war? Have women drawn organizational attention to personnel matters "in general" (usually conceived of as matters affecting a general number of military personnel; i.e., men) and thus taken attention away from their own needs (less numeric, but no less important—to them)?

Such a situation may in fact have been the case had it not been for some important external factors, as we saw in chapter 2. This has especially been the case for health care and family policy issues. It is in these areas in particular that we can see the impact of "women's alliances." These issues have received support from women in Congress and the DACOWITS, and they reflect common areas of concern to both women in the military and military wives. If, indeed, women have been "too small a group," "too unimportant," or "too nonvocal" to be taken seriously, then the support of some outside authority or a group with similar concerns has been necessary. And in recognizing why such assistance is necessary in the first place, we uncover some other possible organizational assumptions: "women's concerns" are just that and are tangential to the "real business" of military organizations ("hardware" and "men's concerns"); furthermore, the special concerns of military women can be ignored by military decision makers unless they affect other (central) parts of the organization or are given visibility by outside agencies.

It is interesting to note here the "overlapping" nature of some of the issues of special concern to military women. But while health care and family policy affect both military women and military wives, other issues are assumed to affect military women only: uniforms, equipment design, sexual harassment in the workplace, and women's military career development. Such an assumption would be correct, however, only if these groups were quite distinct from one another.<sup>72</sup> As we have seen however, increasing numbers of military wives are servicewomen themselves, thus setting the stage for a natural alliance between military women and military wives. One result may be a more visible "push" for issues of special concern to military women. In fact, as we saw earlier, those military women who are married to military men represent a group that also needs to be singled out

by military policymakers for particular attention because they may have a "double occupational identity" as both women in the military and military spouses.

As women in general achieve more equality in marital roles and as an occupational identity apart from their husband's status becomes increasingly important to them, will servicewomen with military husbands begin to challenge the organization's assumptions about *both* military women and military wives? Will the fact that their husbands are in uniform also force a reexamination of traditional organizational assumptions surrounding military men? (Are they indeed all single, young, and available for any assignment worldwide? If some are married, will their wives perform certain—volunteer—work necessary to the effective operation of the organization? Will the "family"—child care—responsibilities presumably performed by those wives be shared with their husbands? Or must these responsibilities be taken care of in another organizational way because both wives and husbands have *military* duties?)<sup>73</sup>

Finally, we need to examine the areas of job performance evaluation and sexual harassment. Sexual harassment began as a problem primarily affecting women and was eventually assigned organizational priority when its importance was highlighted by an external authority (in this case, Congress and the federal civilian workforce). It was then defined by the organization as a problem that applied to both women *and* men. To be sure, sexual harassment is a situation that can and does affect both women and men as victims and as perpetrators; but it *primarily* has men as its perpetrators and women as its victims.<sup>74</sup> The armed forces have treated the symptom, but have not addressed the cause (sexism).

It is easier to impose sanctions on actions than on attitudes, and the military has the power to effectively coerce its members' actions. But in not addressing the root cause of sexual harassment against women, the military has avoided addressing the more fundamental question of sexism. Thus there are military policies against "sexual harassment," but not against "sexism." This may be due to an organizational assumption that sexism is permissible in military organizations.<sup>75</sup> It is similar to saying that discrimination will not be tolerated but prejudice is okay. Or, as is the case currently for women in the military—by both policy and law—both discrimination *and* prejudice are okay.<sup>76</sup>

Such a situation leaves military women especially vulnerable to sexual harassment and different expectations on the job.<sup>77</sup> The situation may in fact be described as one of a great deal of "gender consciousness" in military organizations. For a woman in the military, what matters first is her gender; for a man in the military, what matters first is his occupational identity.

Research on the "unwritten rules" that apply to professional women in other occupational settings may help us to understand the dilemma facing military women.<sup>78</sup> *Because of the assumptions that surround their participation in the organization in the first place* (if you are a woman in a military organization, then you are a part of an organization that finds it acceptable

to discriminate against you), whether women are being evaluated on their own merits or on their gender (or on expectations surrounding both of these) is a difficult question to answer.

## Images

This final key area is crucial to an understanding of the issues facing women in the military. It is, in fact, the area from which all other concerns in this study are ultimately derived.

We have already "seen" one image of women in the military: They are invisible! A closely related perception is that if they exist, then they are men.<sup>79</sup> If these images can be sustained, the underlying organizational assumption that the military is a male organization can be kept in place.

We may be beginning to see the evolution of this assumption, however, or at least the assumption that the military is an *exclusively* male organization. The Code of Conduct for Members of the Armed Forces of the United States was revised in 1988 to read "I am an American . . ." rather than "I am an American fighting man."<sup>80</sup> The organizational assumption now may be that the armed forces are a *predominately* male organization, although evidence of the exclusivity assumption's existence can still be detected. Two important elements are at work here: the "personnel profile" reality and the "institutional ethos" assumption. Just because there are, in fact, women in the armed forces (personnel profile) doesn't mean that they "belong" there (institutional ethos). Moreover, one cannot be a competent "warrior" and a "woman" as well; the two statuses are seen as being incompatible.<sup>81</sup>

Thus it is important to ask, "what kind" of women are in this male-dominated institution? The objective reality is that there are "all kinds" of women in the military: the population is very diversified and will probably become increasingly so as military "policies catch up with realities."<sup>82</sup> But the organizational assumption is not one of diversity. The common stereotype of military women, at least since the slander campaign of World War II,<sup>83</sup> is that their sexuality is suspect. Military women are either "sexual mascots" (prostitutes) for military men<sup>84</sup> or they are "unnatural" women (lesbians) who persist in performing men's roles.<sup>85</sup> The psychological and professional damage caused by recent manifestations of these organizational assumptions can be devastating.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, the organizational impact (the effects of these assumptions on *all* women in the military) can hardly be assessed. At the very least, it affects their day-to-day professional lives. And organizational assumptions may also help to explain why many women may believe themselves to be entrapped by the military's sexual double standard:<sup>87</sup> military men are expected to be actively sexual while actively sexual military women are either "prostitutes" or "lesbians" (if single), or "faithful wives" (if married). (The remaining alternatives—

"celibate" or "discrete"—are often not seen as "viable options" for military women.)

Besides being seen as potential "distractors" or "competitors" to military men, women are seen as weak and thus "a threat to national defense." Some assumptions that can be seen as "positive" actually represent negative connotations about women: that the presence of women in the military fosters cohesion by uniting (white and nonwhite) men;<sup>88</sup> and that women in the military contribute to (men's) esprit de corps by serving as the target of sexist humor.<sup>89</sup> All of these assumptions serve to reinforce the belief that men's contribution to the military is legitimate while women's contribution to the military is questionable.

If such assumptions can impact negatively on not only military women but also on the military itself, should they be evolving *toward* a more positive view? Data from the recently gender-integrated service academies regarding attitudes toward women seems to be ambivalent.<sup>90</sup> Recruiting advertisements directed at women may often set up false expectations; they may be unaware of the real limits upon their participation in the military until they are actually in it. And there are far fewer ads directed toward women than men, thus perpetuating the assumption that men have more of "a place" in this institution than women.

One other place to look for images of women in the military is in popular culture, especially the news media and film. Here, the signs are a bit more positive—women in the military are increasingly being recognized as having contributed to the defense of the nation.<sup>91</sup> And while some recent films continue to perpetuate the assumption of military women as sexually suspect, other films put forward more positive images.<sup>92</sup> Ironically, perhaps the most positive images of military women are found in science fiction and fantasy. And "although it's possible to dismiss these programs as 'kid's stuff,' they may help define roles that the recruits of the 1990's will have grown up with. Whether popular materials influence these young people or merely reflect their interests and perspectives, images of military women exhibiting courage, power, and leadership have become more common in [these programs]."<sup>93</sup>

Yet women in the military are still seen as "the other."<sup>94</sup> It is especially necessary to address this organizational assumption; and the armed forces themselves could do much to dispel it. Particularly essential here is more training in the area of sexual harassment (how and why *not* to do it). Also, more emphasis must be placed on the historical contribution of women to our nation's defense (if it is important to recognize the contributions of military men, it is also important to recognize the contributions of military women).<sup>95</sup> Finally, increased attention must be placed on the issue of how the leadership (command climate) environment and the everyday work setting can help to foster images of military women as coprofessionals with military men.<sup>96</sup>

## Conclusions

In all the issues examined throughout this work, two underlying problems manifest themselves: a lack of recognition of organization assumptions and a lack of change in the face of new information. These two problems are very much interrelated. If we do not recognize the very fundamental assumptions on which policy decisions are based, we cannot as readily change them when the facts of the situation warrant it. Not wanting to change our assumptions, we try instead to fit the facts (and our policies) to them.

It appears that this may be the case for many of our policies concerning women in the military. In effect, the situation and "the rules" have changed but our modern military has not adapted itself to this new world. The time is long overdue for a thorough analysis of these issues and the courage to change our policies—and our institutional assumptions—where they are no longer appropriate.

The values of a nation, as embodied in its social institutions and public policies, are mutually influential forces. Just as change in public policy may often be a response to change in societal values, laws and policies can be the agents of change in institutional arrangements, conditions, and assumptions. This helps to explain not only how policies are formed, but also the spirit and extent to which they may be accepted and carried out. The role of women in the US armed forces is an excellent illustration.

## Epilogue

An examination of women's "past" and "present" in the military implies a related question: What is the "future" of women in the US armed forces? This question should not be ignored.

The issues facing women in the military can be thought of as divided into two major parts: "new" issues and "recurring" ones. However, as we have seen, new issues are often simply recurring issues phrased in different ways with slightly different emphases. Thus, these recurring issues can be thought of as "themes" that frame the overall picture of women in the military.

We have seen that the incorporation of women into the US armed forces has been an evolutionary process, spanning more than 200 years of history. During this time, there have been 12 major recurring questions (themes) concerning the utilization of women in the US military. These recurring themes can be identified in *both* historical and contemporary debate:

1. Should women be in the military at all?
2. If they are to be in the military, should they be given full military status (rank, benefits and privileges, duties and obligations)?



3. What kinds of military training should they get?
4. What kinds of military tasks should they perform?
5. What should be the relationship between women and weapons?
6. How many women should there be in military organizations?
7. How high (to what rank) are women permitted to progress in the organization?
8. How well will military men and women work together? (Especially, will men take military orders from women; i.e., does positional authority "apply" or "count" in the case of women?)
9. What effects will women's biologies and concerns have on an organization based on men's biologies and concerns?
10. Who will monitor the interests and concerns of women in the military?
11. Can women (as individuals or as a group) be incorporated into the "brotherhood of war"?
12. Will women change the ethos of military organizations?

With such a framework in mind, it is much easier to identify and place "new" issues in context. Actually, though, what is a new issue concerning women in the military may simply be the issue that is *most important* at the time: issues concerning family policy and the combat exclusion are currently of greater importance and visibility than are questions of positional authority and whether women should be in the military at all. But all of the 12 themes are still there.

Perhaps the most useful analytic tool for identifying and predicting new issues likely to be of consequence to women in the future is Judith Hicks Stiehm's "generations of military women" or cohort analysis approach.<sup>97</sup> This method looks at the expectations and "the rules" surrounding women's participation in the armed forces when they entered military service, and the important events and policy decisions throughout the service careers of women in these age cohorts. Life-cycle variables (especially marriage and family planning decisions) are also considered important. The 12-recurring-themes approach and Stiehm's cohort analysis methodology, if refined and put into wider use, may provide potentially powerful techniques to assist in future policy planning.

Finally, we must look beyond the question of "women in the military" to the larger context of the organization itself. This author has suggested elsewhere that the role of the military may be changing from one of "combat" to a more widely inclusive one of "conflict management."<sup>98</sup> If such is the case, then the issue will not simply be one of how (and whether) to incorporate women into combat, but will be one of how (and whether) to train *all* military personnel in peacemaking as well as war-waging roles.

#### Notes

1. M. C. Devilbiss, "Needs and Values in Military Decision-Making" (Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society, Chicago, October 1987).

2. Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1985).

3. An analogy here might be with Air Force organizational structure. Experts in Tactical Air Command, Strategic Air Command, or Military Airlift Command, for example, would "look out for" and be advocates of TAC, SAC, and MAC interests, respectively. Presumably, these experts would also have decision-making authority in their respective arenas.

4. Judith Hicks Stiehm, *Arms and the Enlisted Woman* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 182. As more women enter decision-making positions in political and military roles, this reality may change; but the notion that it is still principally men who make military policy continues to hold true in the twentieth century.

5. *Ibid.*, 50. Military policymakers also make decisions about men as a group, but Stiehm's point is still well-taken: "the reverse experience [women making decisions about men as a category] is probably one that few adult men have had or can ever imagine."

6. *Ibid.*, 13, 21, 213-20; see also M. C. Devilbiss, "Job Opportunities for Women in the U.S. Armed Forces," in *Job Training for Women: Research Perspectives and Policy Directions*, ed. Sharon Harlan and Ronnie J. Stienberg (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

7. Stiehm, 65-66, 148-53, devotes considerable attention to the question of scientific veracity and accountability as factors in policy decisions on women in the military. This is the "objectivity" versus the "right answers" charge about studies involving women in the military that was raised by Dr Mary Evelyn Bragg Huey, Texas Woman's University president and DACOWITS chair, in her letter to Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, June 1983.

8. Thus "family policy" issues became of increasing concern when they were thought to impact upon the readiness and retention of military men. When "family policy" issues were seen as largely—or as specifically—"women's issues," they were not of central concern.

9. For specific demographics on the changing marital and family roles for military enlisted personnel, see Stiehm, 41-44.

10. *Ibid.*, 213.

11. *Ibid.*, 42, 118, 119.

12. Indeed the question here may not be what if military women with children (mothers) don't show up for deployments, but what if they *do*? This may be called the "baby brigade" question. The military may fear that it would have a large child care problem on its hands in the second instance, even though care of children in case of parental deployment is deemed an *individual*, not an organizational, responsibility. See Stiehm, 21, 42, 217.

13. *Ibid.*, 125.

14. Such a step would then assume that women in uniform are important to the accomplishment of the military mission and therefore the military wishes to have and/or keep women in it. However, this may not be the case; in fact the organizational assumption may be that women are *not* essential. See Stiehm, 221; and Brian Mitchell, *Weak Link: The Feminization of the American Military* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway Publishers, 1989).

15. Stiehm, 28-46. Her analysis is a good example of this.

16. M. C. Devilbiss and Carolyn C. Perrucci, "Effects of Role Multiplicity on U.S. Army Personnel," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 10, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 1-13.

17. Stiehm, 221.

18. *Ibid.*, 174. "Accessions are the heart of the women-in-the-military matter. If women are not accessed, all other considerations become moot." Accession questions are, however, based on logical prior assumptions concerning "images" of women in military organizations—and indeed images of military organizations (organizational "self-concepts") as well. It is these "images" issues, it will be argued here, that form the heart of the "women-in-the-military matter."

19. The present percentage of women in the military (approximately 10 percent) falls into Kanter's classification of a "skewed" group in which the sex ratio is more than 100:0 but less than 85:15. Characteristic of such a group, according to Kanter, is a "dominant-versus-token culture" in which the token group survives in the environment by adapting to

the culture of the dominant group. See Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Men and Women of the Corporation* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1977), 129-212, 245-49.

20. Mitchell.

21. Several authors make this point. See for example Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1987); and Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You? The Militarization of Women's Lives* (Boston: South End Press, 1983).

22. It is important to identify and examine these underlying organizational beliefs because in doing so we are helped to understand why—even in the absence of data to the contrary (women do not have more overall "lost time" than men, for example) the perception persists that military women are "less available" or "less able" and for these reasons are liabilities to the organization. See, for example, data presented in "Pregnancy in the Navy: Impact on Absenteeism, Attrition, and Work Group Morale," by Marsha S. Olson and Susan S. Stumpf, TR 78-25 (San Diego, Calif.: Navy Personnel Research and Development Center, 1978). Such perceptions continue because they are rooted in fundamental organizational assumptions about the limited usefulness and lower value of women in the military relative to men in the military.

23. See a critique of the limited substitutability of military women for military men in *Women and the Military*, by Martin Binkin and Shirley J. Bach (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1977).

24. Such assumptions about men's military roles have not always been the case. In fact such assumptions are relatively recent ones. At one time—and arguably there are still indications of this in the military today (see John Ginovsky, "Black Pilots: Why Does the Air Force Attract So Few?" "Prejudices Existed Then and Exist Now," and "Complaints of Race Discrimination Have Risen during the Last Two Years," *Air Force Times*, 5 June 1989, 14, 15, 20)—nonwhite males were considered to have the ability to perform only certain types of military jobs. Thus (as is the case currently for all women), nonwhite males were similarly restricted by military organizations to assignments in only those certain types of jobs. See M. C. Devilbiss, "Cynthia Enloe's *Ethnic Soldiers: State Security in Divided Societies*," in *Women's Studies International Forum* 5, no. 3 (Fall 1982): 378-81.

25. This concept is identified and explained in further detail in Nina Yuval-Davis, "Sexual Division of Labour in Militaries," in *Loaded Questions: Women in the Military*, ed. Wendy Chapkis (Washington, D.C.: Transnational Institute, 1981), 31-35.

26. Stiehm, 224-27.

27. See Stiehm, 149; and M. C. Devilbiss, "Gender Integration and Unit Deployment: A Study of GI Jo," *Armed Forces and Society* 11, no. 4 (Summer 1985): 536-37.

28. It is in basic military training, rather than in subsequent "advanced training" or "professional military education" that we can see these organizational assumptions at work most clearly. Most advanced training courses in the military (under basic training courses) are gender integrated.

29. These arguments are most applicable to the case of *enlisted* men and women. Male and female *officers* receive gender-integrated basic military training through ROTC and the service academies. Thus, their initial knowledge base and the skills they acquire are likely to be more similar than dissimilar.

30. The case can be made that "nurse" is a "nontraditional" job for military men since men were not allowed to be military nurses until 1955 (Army) and 1967 (Navy). However, men have always performed medical roles in military organizations.

31. Linda Grant DePauw, "Women in Combat: The Revolutionary War Experience," *Armed Forces and Society* 7, no. 2 (Winter 1981): 209-26.

32. Stiehm, 15, 102, argues that all women in the military are in a "nontraditional" job. The issue, however, is that of comparison groups. If we are comparing military women to civilian women, then Stiehm's observation holds. If, however, we are looking "inside" the military as an organization, then the distinction can be made between "traditional" and

"nontraditional" roles for women based on the "history" of women's participation in such jobs.

33. *Background Review: Women in Military* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1981), 77; and Myrna Rottman, "Women Graduates of the Coast Guard Academy: Views from the Bridge," *Armed Forces and Society* 11, no. 2 (Winter 1985): 250-62.

34. These different assumptions surrounding the male and female "utilization questions" are identified by Stiehm, 135.

35. Phrasing the question in this way ("how many women can the military utilize?") presupposes that there is an upper limit on the number of women the military can use. Put another way, the question is "how many of a less utilizable group of people can the military contain?" See further discussion in Stiehm, 155-78.

36. Or even as unnecessary! Mitchell.

37. Marilyn Loden, *Feminine Leadership, or, How to Succeed in Business without Being One of the Boys* (New York: Times Books, 1985).

38. M. C. Devilbiss, "Creating a Positive Command Climate: New Roles for Leaders" (Paper presented at the Center for Army Leadership, Third Annual Leadership Research Conference, Kansas City, Missouri, May 1987).

39. *Ibid.*, 6-12. Two case study examples are Air Force Gen W. L. ("Bill") Creech and Army Lt Gen Walter F. Ulmer, Jr.

40. That is, the role itself becomes more important than the characteristics of the person in it. This is the notion of an evolving emphasis on the *achieved* dimension of role (how well one performs one's job—an *individual* consideration) over the *ascribed* dimension of role (one's membership in a particular category or class of people—a *group* consideration).

41. As the mobilization model of the military evolves into the standing force model, as the conscript force evolves into an all-volunteer force, and as a primarily combat organization evolves into a conflict management institution. See M. C. Devilbiss, "Defense in the Global Village: The Impact and Consequences of Global 'Megatrends' on the U.S. Military" (Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Security Studies Section of the International Studies Association, Washington, D.C., November 1988).

42. That legal restrictions (Title 10, US Code) apply to the utilization of women in the Air Force and Navy is true, but all branches of the armed forces place many more restrictions on the utilization of women than the law requires. See Binkin and Bach.

43. Stiehm, 156.

44. M. C. Devilbiss, "Attitudes toward Women in Combat Roles" (Paper presented at the biennial conference of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society, Chicago, October 1981); see also Stiehm, 224-30.

45. "Women Content In Units Force Development Test (MAXWAC)" (Alexandria, Va.: Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 1977); "Women Content in the Army: REFORGER 77 (REFWAC 77)" (Alexandria, Va.: Army Research Institute, 1978); Charles C. Moskos, Jr., "Female GIs in the Field," *Society* 22, no. 6 (September-October 1985): 28-33; and Devilbiss, "Gender Integration and Unit Deployment," 523-52.

46. Barbara Tuchman, *The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1984); see also Stiehm, 223, 224.

47. Senator William Proxmire entered these remarks in the Congressional Record on 21 March, 24 March, and 25 March 1986.

48. "Women in Army Combat Units To Be Reassigned," *Minerva: Quarterly Report on Women and the Military* 5, no. 4 (Winter 1987): 38-39.

49. Stiehm, 230-32.

50. Also any individual man's career development. But if women are "less valuable" to the organization, then (theoretically) hampering a woman's career development is not as serious an organizational matter as hampering a man's.

51. For an excellent discussion of the "protection assumption," see Judith Hicks Stiehm, "The Protected, the Protector, and the Defender," *Women's Studies International Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (Fall 1982): 367-76.

52. Compare data on current roles for military women with a history of their utilization in World War II. See Jeanne Holm, *Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution* (Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1982); and Mattie E. Treadwell, *The Women's Army Corps* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1954).

53. Perry D. Luckett, "Military Women in Contemporary Film, Television, and Media," *Minerva: Quarterly Report on Women and the Military* 7, no. 2 (Summer 1989).

54. The contemporary experience of women in other NATO nations (e.g., Canada, Denmark) in direct combat roles (land, sea, and air) provides some organizational comparisons for the US case. For more on this issue, see Nancy L. Goldman, ed., *Female Soldiers—Combatants or Noncombatants? Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982); and Ralph P. Witherspoon, "Female Soldiers in Combat—A Policy Adrift," *Minerva: Quarterly Report on Women and the Military* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 1-28.

55. Stiehm, 181-92; M. C. Devilbiss, "Women and Compulsory Military Service" (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, New York, August 1980).

56. David R. Segal, Nora Scott Kinzer, and John C. Woelfel, "The Concept of Citizenship and Attitudes toward Women in Combat," *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research* 3 (1977): 469-77; M. C. Devilbiss, "Women and the Draft" in *The Military Draft: Selected Readings on Conscription*, ed. Martin Anderson (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1982).

57. DePauw, "Women in Combat."

58. Devilbiss, "Women and Compulsory Military Service."

59. D'Ann Campbell, *Women at War with America: Private Lives in a Patriotic Era* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984).

60. Stiehm, 190-92, cites contemporary survey data which points up objections to women both being *prohibited from* and *coerced into* combat roles.

61. This is the issue of whether or not, when women participate in national defense, they should do so on different terms than men. Moreover, there are differing public opinion views on women and national service and national defense. See Stiehm, 181-92.

62. Legislation to enact. The "National Community Service Act" was introduced in Congress in the Spring of 1989. Other "national service" legislation is also pending.

63. A potential issue here would be the skills question: would those young people subject to national service have such medical training and skills?

64. However, if the young man's experience is having to register but never realistically expecting to be "called up," then the experiences of young men and young women are still more similar than different.

65. Here the word *common* is used to mean *uniting* as well as *typical*. It may also be seen in the sense of *initiatory*.

66. Data collection specifically on women in the military is now becoming more likely to include information on minority military women. See *Background Review*.

67. Stiehm, 188. Black women are, for example, more likely to perceive the military as an opportunity. This may affect accessions and reenlistment rates.

68. John Ginovsky, "AF Opposes Recruitment Quotas for Women," *Air Force Times*, 6 May 1985.

69. Stiehm, 239-41.

70. *Ibid.*, 23-24.

71. New Air Force slogans suggest that "our people are our most important resources." Slogans need, however, to be incorporated and demonstrated into the actual working environment before they can become more than "lip service" to a new concept.

72. And/or if either (or both) groups altruistically considered the concerns of any other person or group as "their own" concern as well, even if they were not personally affected by it.

73. Such a situation would, however, assume the primary or "military" over "family" role obligations—an assumption the military (and the society at large) is prepared to apply to men, but not to women. This assumption may be changing as occupational roles become increasingly important for women, and family roles become increasingly important for men. Thus the perception of the military as a "marital martial institution" in conflict. Stiehm, 213-22.

74. Stiehm, 150-53, 205-8, makes important points in this regard. One is that certain harassment in the military can be thought of as generic harassment (applying to both women and men, as an organizational expectation). A second point is that sexual harassment in particular is predominately a "junior enlisted woman" issue: that is, for military women it "lessens" (overtly?) with age and rank. And third, sexual harassment is particularly prevalent for women in "nontraditional" military occupations, perhaps because of the continued questioning of the legitimacy of women's presence in such roles.

75. Linda Grant DePauw, "Gender as Stigma: Probing Some Sensitive Issues," *Minerva: Quarterly Report on Women and the Military* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1988).

76. Mitchell. It is argued that discrimination against women in the armed forces is permissible because national security is more important. This is based on the assumption that women in the military—and especially in combat roles—would compromise, not enhance, national security.

77. These issues relate, of course, to "command climate." Stiehm, 151. See also Devilbiss, "Creating a Positive Command Climate."

78. See Patricia A. McBroom, *The Third Sex: The New Professional Woman* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1983); and Karen O. Dunivin, "There's Men, There's Women, and There's Me: The Role and Strategy of Military Women," *Minerva: Quarterly Report on Women and the Military* 6, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 43-68.

79. Or, perhaps more accurately here, that they are "like everyone else": that is, men. See Stiehm, 230-32.

80. However, it took a military woman to point out the gender exclusivity language of the old code, and the commander in chief of the armed forces to correct it. "Code of Conduct for Fighting 'Men' Revised," *Minerva's Bulletin Board* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 6-7.

81. Mitchell.

82. Holm, 260-88; Stiehm, 28-46.

83. Treadwell, 191-218.

84. See Philip A. Kalisch and Margaret Scobey, "Female Nurses in American Wars: Helplessness Suspended for the Duration" (Paper presented at the biennial conferences of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society, Chicago, October 1980).

85. DePauw, "Gender as Stigma," 32-35.

86. Stiehm, 127-32.

87. *Ibid.*, 124.

88. *Ibid.*, 154.

89. Marvin R. Koller, *Humor and Society* (Houston, Tex.: Cap and Gown Press, 1988): 240-41.

90. In some service academies, men become more "traditional" in their attitudes toward women; in other academies, men progressively adopted more "contemporary" attitudes toward women. See Judith Hicks Stiehm, *Bring Me Men and Women: Mandated Change at the U.S. Air Force Academy* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1981).

91. For example, recent efforts to construct a "nurse" statue near the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.; also efforts to establish a Women in Military Service Memorial in Arlington Cemetery.

92. Lockett.

93. *Ibid.*

94. DePaurw, "Gender as Stigma," 35.
95. And it is necessary to have this training for all military personnel, not just for military women.
96. Tuchman.
97. Stiehm, *Arms and the Enlisted Woman*, 28-46.
98. Devilbiss, "Defense in the Global Village."

## **Appendix**

### **Ten Current Key Issue Areas Affecting Women in the US Armed Forces**

#### ***Organizational Monitors***

##### **1. Overt symptoms:**

- a. Several diverse groups are set up for the purpose of dealing with issues affecting women in the military.
- b. Military decision makers lack expertise on background and implications of issues affecting military women.
- c. Special outside interest groups, judicial authorities, and congressional representatives become monitors and advocates for issues concerning women in the military.
- d. Military women become more active in forming unofficial support groups and professional societies for the purpose of discussing issues of mutual interest and to seek information (and often justification) from policymakers on recent decisions affecting military women.

##### **2. Contributory causes:**

- a. Disestablishment in the 1970s of women's directors offices, specially equipped with the knowledge base and the ability to monitor these issues and then offer advice to decision makers on this basis.
- b. Crucial background knowledge and information on this issue rests in the hands of a small specialized group of experts, many of whom are civilians.
- c. Legislative and judicial authorities have begun to define certain policies pertaining to military women as inequitable and have pressed the military for justification and/or policy resolution.
- d. Military women's perception of common interests and a need to network; fear of the loss of a significant organizational power base or a source of top level influence for women's concerns; and fear that the organizational monitors available may hurt rather than help them.<sup>1</sup>

##### **3. Conceptual question to ask:**

What organizational structure and mechanisms will be used to (1) identify and (2) deal with these issues?



#### 4. The need:

An institutional collectivity of informed experts who are able, on the basis of their expertise, to make policy decisions on issues of concern to women in the military *and who have the organizational authority to do so.*

### ***Family Policy***

#### 1. Overt symptoms:

- a. About five to 10 percent of female military personnel pregnant at any one time.
- b. Increase in number of single parents who are military members.
- c. Increase in number of dual career military couples (both husband and wife in the military).
- d. More requests for joint-spouse assignments.
- e. Deployability concerns within the organization about military members with family responsibilities (especially military women).
- f. "Job versus family" conflicts and their potential impact on retention.
- g. Fraternization between male and female military members becoming more visible and frequent, and being of increasing concern.

#### 2. Contributory causes:

- a. Military women in child-bearing years not forced to choose between having a family and having a military career.
- b. Child custody not a bar to retention in the military.
- c. Potential field of eligible marriage partners exists in the military as it does in comparable civilian careers and locations; also, women increasingly perceive the military as an attractive career choice and may elect to stay in with their husbands rather than seek other careers.
- d. Married military members' changing expectations: choosing to be assigned at a location with their spouse as the norm rather than the exception.
- e. Organizational pressure for all military members to be available for worldwide duty and to carry their share of duties so that others will not have to "pick up the slack."
- f. Changing *individual* expectations and values. The life sector expectations/responsibilities of the "job" may not always be given priority by the military member over that person's "family" expectations/responsibilities.
- g. Military men and women increasingly work together and have the opportunity to get acquainted; in this situation, some romantic interpersonal attractions may occur.

3. Conceptual question to ask:

How should the *organizational* issues and implications of marriage, pregnancy, and parenthood "be dealt with" and what implications do they raise for the military as an institution?

4. The need:

Factual information on the extent to which these issues affect how many military members, an appraisal of their needs, and then scientific study of the *actual* organizational effects of family policy issues; policy resolution based on these assessments.

### **Numbers**

1. Overt symptoms:

- a. Increasing numbers of women in the military.
- b. Increasing percentages of women in the military.
- c. Different accession and growth rates for women in different branches of the armed forces.

2. Contributory causes:

a. In an emergency or in an all-volunteer environment, women become an increasingly valuable personnel resource.

b. Widening span of military job opportunities for women due to internal organizational necessities (changing military organizational structure and military personnel requirements) facilitated by external factors and pressures. In a force of relatively stable size, more military jobs designed as male-female interchangeable, and a greater overall military need for job skills that women possess or can be "appropriately" trained for.

c. Service branches separately identify and negotiate female requirements with their respective service secretaries.

3. Conceptual questions to ask:

a. What are some of the organizational effects of the incorporation of increased numbers and percentages of women in the armed forces?

b. What are the assumptions behind perceptions of accession, utilization, retention, and promotion issues for women in the military? Are these assumptions accurate and valid?

#### 4. The need:

An open assessment of the need that the military has for womanpower and the scrutiny of assumptions upon which this need determination is based.

### ***Training***

#### 1. Overt symptoms:

a. Men and women are sometimes trained together and sometimes trained separately for military duties. Basic military training, once gender-integrated for almost all of the services, is now gender-segregated for almost all of the services.

b. Training situations and techniques of instruction may be different for women and men.

c. Women are not trained in the full range of military specialties as men are.

#### 2. Contributory causes:

a. Current law and service policy perceives certain types of training (particularly combat skills) as essential for all men but unnecessary for all women; women are seen to slow men down in physical training and are therefore separated and/or given less demanding programs.

b. Perceptions of instructors may influence instructional techniques; men are allowed repeated chances to "learn by doing" while women may have fewer opportunities to fail and try again.

c. Exclusion of women from combat roles by law (Title 10 of the US Code for Air Force and Navy) and by policy (Combat Exclusion Policy for the Army) form the basis for their exclusion from *training* in those jobs designated "combat" by the services.

#### 3. Conceptual questions to ask:

a. What kind of training shall women receive for what kind(s) of military jobs?

b. What is the relationship of military training programs to the actual and the perceived abilities of women as a group? to women as individuals?

c. Why is access to military training programs different for women than it is for men?

d. What does the concept of "military leadership" mean, and are current training programs adequately preparing women to assume positions as military leaders?

#### 4. The need:

A clear linkage between training programs for women and their subsequent utilization in the organization so that women can (a) acquire the training and skills they need, and (b) utilize the abilities they possess and acquire.

### **Roles**

#### 1. Overt symptoms:

- a. Sexual division of labor within the military.<sup>2</sup>
- b. Men are in all military jobs, including the military's "core" roles—combat; women are not in all military jobs, and jobs they do hold are in peripheral (support or backup), not central, roles.
- c. Interpersonal difficulties may arise in work situations, especially where women are utilized in "nontraditional" roles.
- d. Very few women in high level positions and/or of high military rank.

#### 2. Contributory causes:

- a. Perception and identification of certain military jobs as exclusively male, predominately male, or predominately female (none perceived as exclusively female).<sup>3</sup>
- b. Exclusion of women as a class from combat roles based on law and service policy; moreover, "command climate" (perceptions, interpretations, decisions, and regulations made by local policymakers and supervisors) may also influence the utilization of women, particularly those who are trained in "nontraditional" specialties.<sup>4</sup> Perception that the military's central roles call solely for *manpower*.
- c. Perception by work group members that women in nontraditional military occupations may not possess the requisite knowledge, skills, and training to adequately function in these jobs; further perception of non-legitimacy of women ("no right to be there") in these roles. Perceived threat to working group environment, interpersonal relationships (especially to "male bonding"), and individual group members' self-concepts.<sup>5</sup>
- d. Number of women who can be promoted to high rank limited because of small pool of eligibles; when promotion bottlenecks occur, some military women, seeing that there is no room for them to advance in the organization, may elect to leave it.

#### 3. Conceptual questions to ask:

- a. Why (for what purpose) is there a sexual division of labor in the military.

b. In utilization considerations, why are women judged first as a class and then as individuals with different abilities, aptitudes, and interests, while men are judged on individual abilities, aptitudes, and interests alone? Why are women (especially those in nontraditional roles) often perceived as not legitimate or not skilled in these roles in comparison with men of similar background and training?

c. What are the personal (individual) *and* organizational (structural) barriers to women's promotional and career opportunities in the military?

d. What roles do laws, policies, and command climates (as separate and as interacting forces) play in the utilization of women in the military?<sup>6</sup>

#### 4. The need:

An honest assessment of the contribution that women as individuals can make to the furtherance of the military's mission and the organizational mechanisms put in place to accomplish that mission.

### ***Combat Exclusion***

#### 1. Overt symptoms:

a. Women (because of class restrictions placed on them as a group) cannot be assigned to certain types of military jobs (combat).

b. Women are theoretically placed in "noncombat" military roles only, but analyses of actual military positions show some women are assigned to and working in "combat" jobs.

c. Career opportunities for women in certain military specialties (e.g., aviation and certain sea duty ratings) are limited because of the combat exclusion.

#### 2. Contributory causes:

a. Title 10 of the United States Code (sections 6015 and 8549) currently restricts women as a class (all women, because they are women) from serving in "combat" positions in the Navy and Air Force, respectively. The Army's combat exclusion policy, although not a statutory prohibition, has the same ultimate effect: exclusion of women as a class from "combat" positions.

b. It is hard to define just what is and what is not a combat role in the US armed forces. Moreover, this definition is subject to interpretation and change at the behest of military decision makers.

c. Certain military specialties have combat assignment career paths; therefore individual women (who, as a group, are restricted from combat assignments) are prohibited by their class membership from serving in the required assignment(s) necessary for them (as individuals) to advance in

their careers. Thus, even women who receive initial training in certain specialties—and possess the required skills—cannot be fully utilized to support the military mission.

3. Conceptual questions to ask:

a. Why are women utilizable in only certain ways (jobs) in the military?

b. Is a "combat exclusion" in military organizations justifiable for any group of military personnel? Why/why not?

4. The need:

To identify the reason(s) and assumptions behind combat exclusion for women in the military, to scrutinize the validity of these reasons and assumptions, and to openly assess the individual effects and organizational impacts of continuation, modification, or elimination of this exclusion.

### ***The Draft***

1. Overt symptoms:

a. Absence of conscription (compulsory military service); registration currently required of men but not of women.

b. Currently, all personnel (men and women) serve in the military as volunteers. In much of the recent past, however, men were both conscripts and volunteers while women served only as volunteers in the US armed forces.<sup>7</sup>

c. A shortage of medical personnel in particular may force the issue of drafting women into the US military.

d. A debate on compulsory "national service" includes the question of whether women will be subject to the draft.

2. Contributory causes:

a. Congress proposes, and the Supreme Court upholds, the legality of registration for men but not women.

b. Although the idea of conscripting women has often been formally proposed (and public opinion poll data supports such an idea), the United States—unlike some other nations—has never required women to register or to be drafted for military service.

c. Many of the required medical specialties in the military are occupational areas that employ significant numbers of women.

d. Changing expectations regarding the concepts of "citizenship," "national defense," and "national service," and the extent to which these are women's as well as men's responsibilities.

3. Conceptual questions to ask:

a. What are the reasons for a draft? What is the relationship between "national service" and "national defense"?

b. What are the reasons for including women in a national draft? What are the reasons for excluding them?<sup>8</sup>

c. Are there alternatives to a national conscription of health care professionals in having enough people to fill military health career roles?

4. The need:

An assessment of the changing nature of the civilian-military interface in contemporary society, along with a reassessment of the military as an organization "in context" with other organizations in the broad, overall context of national security/national defense. An examination of the changing participation of women (as individuals, as a group) in statecraft and nation-building roles.

### ***Minority Women***

1. Overt symptoms:

a. Increasing numbers of minority women in the military.

b. Feelings of isolation (of being a "minority within a minority").

c. Lack of a sense of the history and contributions of women in general—and minority women in particular—to the US armed forces.

d. Concerns and behaviors (e.g., higher reenlistment rates) that may be dissimilar to other identifiable gender and racial subgroups within the military.<sup>9</sup>

2. Contributory causes:

a. Military service (especially its pay scales and occupational choices) seen as an increasingly attractive job choice/career option for minority women.

b. Low absolute numbers of minority women in the military; lack of role models of high-ranking military minority women.

c. Lack of an institutional commitment on the part of the military services to publicize the history and contributions of military women.

d. Low absolute numbers often result in ignoring this group's needs and/or behavior; also, often a lack of appropriate comparison or reference group within studies that do focus on military minority women.

### 3. The need:

An assessment of the special needs of this group. The adoption by all military organizations of a program recognizing the historical contributions of women in the military in general and minority women in particular. Organizational assessments of particular matters of personal and career importance (e.g., assignment and promotion realities, racism and sexual harassment) to military minority women. The inclusion of minority women as a category of interest in studies done on military personnel, and comparison groups identified for such studies (e.g., white women in the military, nonwhite men in the military, nonwhite civilian women, nonwhite women in other service areas).

### ***Special Concerns***

#### 1. Overt symptoms:

- a. Lack of facilities and skilled medical personnel for special health care needs of military women.
- b. Items of uniform often do not fit women properly (e.g., boots are a recurring problem) and therefore may contribute to health and safety hazards and job performance inefficiencies; uniform clothing that serves to identify as a separate group (e.g., headgear).
- c. Women's military grooming and personal appearance standards are difficult to define; also, lack of knowledge on the part of male supervisors and coworkers as to appropriate standards for women.
- d. Equipment designed for the average size (American) man may be difficult for the average size woman (and for smaller men) to operate, posing potential safety and performance compromises.<sup>10</sup>
- e. Job performance evaluations may be different for men and women doing similar jobs in similar ways.
- f. Cases on sexual harassment are increasing.

#### 2. Contributory causes:

- a. Lack of information on, and misperceptions and misunderstandings about, the particular health care needs of military women.
- b. Perceptions of women's uniforms as an extra burden on the system; maintaining distinguishing uniform markers as visible symbols to set women off as a special part of the military.
- c. "Women's issues" defined as not central to the organization and therefore not as important.
- d. Perceptions of men as the "norm" (the standard); women as the "other" (the exception).<sup>11</sup>
- e. Job performance evaluations based on and affected by perceptions of gender, not on job performance itself.



f. Once thought to be inherent to military organizations, sexism in the form of overt sexual harassment is beginning to be defined as unacceptable. Yet there is the continuing perception of women in the military as sexual objects, not as coprofessionals.

3. Conceptual questions to ask:

- a. Why are issues of special concern to women seen as less important or central to the organization than issues of special concern to men?
- b. Why are women as a group "marked off"?
- c. Why is it difficult to see military women as coprofessionals with military men?

4. The need:

To define issues of special concern to women in the military as *important* to the military and as *organizational concerns*, not as "women's problems"; on this basis, to begin to seek solutions to issues in this area.

### ***Images***

1. Overt symptoms:

- a. Images of women portrayed in recruiting ads may not make clear the limitations imposed on jobs available to women and may raise false hopes and expectations.
- b. Women in the military are often portrayed negatively in the media and in folklore.
- c. Women in the military—and women veterans—are invisible.

2. Contributory causes:

- a. Frequency of recruiting ads less for women than for men; ads portray "ideal situations" because this is a technique to "sell" the military as a job option/career choice to women.
- b. In fiction and in oral (and sometimes, written) history, we find hidden assumptions expressed about women in the military; they are personifications of evil, deviance, etc.
- c. Perception that women were not there, did not contribute, or did not experience the same horrible circumstances of war as men did. Perception that women were not—or should not be—a part of military organizations.<sup>12</sup> Fear that recognition of women's presence in, and contributions to military organizations implies a dependence on them and a debt owed to them.

### 3. The need:

To continue to define sexual harassment as unacceptable behavior in military organizations and to increase efforts to eliminate it. To examine the relationship between sexual harassment and its larger context (sexism) and determine whether this concept is also considered to be unacceptable in military organizations. To identify the common perceptions of women in the military through public opinion research and through surveys within military organizations themselves, and then to ask: what is the reason for these perceptions? are these perceptions detrimental to servicewomen? to servicemen? if these perceptions are detrimental, how can negative images be changed into positive ones?

#### Notes

1. "DACOWITS Blamed for Parris Island Witch Hunt," *Minerva's Bulletin Board* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 7, 8.
2. Nina Yuval-Davis, "Sexual Division of Labour in Militaries," in *Loaded Questions: Women in the Military*, ed. Wendy Chapkis (Washington, D.C.: Transnational Institute, 1981), 31-35.
3. Judith Hicks Stiehm, *Arms and the Enlisted Woman* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 90, 91, 175, 204.
4. *Ibid.*, 16, 22, 23, 26.
5. *Ibid.*, 151, 152.
6. M. C. Devilbiss, "Creating a Positive Command Climate: New Roles for Leaders" (Paper presented at the Center for Army Leadership, Third Annual Leadership Research Conference, Kansas City, Missouri, May 1987).
7. During the American Revolution, qualified women were subject to local militia call-up (a localized "draft"), just as qualified men were. See Linda Grant DePauw, "Women in Combat: The Revolutionary War Experience," *Armed Forces and Society* 7, no. 2 (Winter 1981): 209-26.
8. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall pointed out the need to ask the reasons for excluding women from registration in his dissent in *Rostker v. Goldberg*, 101 S. Ct. 2646 (1981).
9. Martin Binkin and Mark J. Eitelberg, with Alvin J. Schexnider and Marvin M. Smith, *Blacks and the Military* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1982), 171.
10. Stiehm, 147, 203.
11. Linda Grant DePauw, "Gender as Stigma: Probing Some Sensitive Issues," *Minerva: Quarterly Report on Women and the Military* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 29-43; see also Stiehm, 208.
12. Brian Mitchell, *Weak Link: The Feminization of the American Military* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway Publishers, 1989).

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